

# Memoir

OF

## LIEUTENANT RUDOLPH( DE LISLE, R.N

OF THE ROYAL NAVAL BRIGADE ON THE UPPER NILE

BY THE

REV. H. N. OXENHAM, M.A.

*Author of "Short Studies and Religious," &c. &c.*

" 'They wrought in faith,' and not, 'They wrought in doubt,'  
Is the proud epitaph inscribed above  
Our glorious dead."—G. MASSKY.

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# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
GRACEDIEU AND GARENDON . . . . .	I

## CHAPTER II.

RUDOLPH'S EARLY BOYHOOD . . . . .	10
-----------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER III.

THE BRITANNIA . . . . .	19
-------------------------	----

## CHAPTER IV.

THE FLYING SQUADRON . . . . .	28
-------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER V.

FOUR YEARS ON THE CAMELEON . . . . .	44
--------------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER VI.

CRUISING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND PACIFIC . . . . .	77
---	----

## CHAPTER VII.

THE LAST PARTING . . . . .	PAGE 110
----------------------------	-------------

## CHAPTER VIII.

MORAL CHARACTERISTICS . . . . .	123
---------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIOUS FIDELITY . . . . .	138
------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER X.

LETTERS FROM THE NILE . . . . .	152
---------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

VICTORY AND DEATH . . . . .	233
-----------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

REQUIEM SEMPITERNAM . . . . .	246
-------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE WITNESS OF A NOBLE LIFE . . . . .	264
---------------------------------------	-----

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**Memoir**

OF

**LIEUTENANT RUDOLPH DE LISLE, R.N.**





Willa Love to all. Love  
Very affec. son  
Rudolph de Hole

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“ ‘My Lord hath need of these flowerets gay,’  
The Reaper said, and smiled;  
‘Dear tokens of the earth are they,  
Where He was once a Child.’

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,  
The flowers she most did love;  
She knew she should find them all again  
In the fields of light above.”

LONGFELLOW.



LONDON: RICHARD CLAY & SONS, PRINTERS.

*Pretiosa in conspectu Domini mors sanctorum Eius.*

TO

LAURA MARY DE LISLE

THE WIDOWED MOTHER OF NOBLE SONS

WHO IN THE HEROISM OF CHRISTIAN RESIGNATION

ONCE AND AGAIN

HAS NOBLY GIVEN HER BELOVED

TO DIE FIGHTING FOR THEIR COUNTRY

**This Brief Record**

IS OF RIGHT INSCRIBED

IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY OF THOSE

WHO WERE LOVELY AND PLEASANT IN THEIR LIVES

AND IN DEATH ARE NOT DIVIDED.

R. I. P.



## PREFACE.

TO the common instinct of humanity there has ever been something peculiarly touching and significant in the death of those cut off in the flower of their youth or in the prime of early manhood. The sentiment found expression of old in that most melancholy and most musical of Hellenic proverbs—a lingering echo perhaps of some half-forgotten tale of the translation of Enos—which attains its highest and only adequate fulfilment under the Gospel; “Whom the gods love die young.” And this feeling of natural sympathy is at once deepened and transfigured on their behalf whose early death has been also an act of voluntary self-devotion. In all the soul-inspiring annals

of the ancient Church there is no more glorious or inspiring page than that which is crimsoned deep in the generous passion-blood of her martyr-boys. To few comparatively in the present day is that special privilege vouchsafed. But still it is possible, in the words inscribed on Rudolph de Lisle's sword, to fight and to fall "for God, for country, for righteousness." To die for one's country is the next best thing to dying for the faith. And when the peril is encountered in the temper of the old Crusaders, under a lofty sense of duty to God and man, those who are called to weep over "the unreturning brave," may pass unblamed, if to their spirit's yearning gaze is revealed the vision of their loved and lost ones amid the white-robed martyr-host, bearing the victor's palm.

Such an one pre-eminently was Rudolph de Lisle. There was about him from childhood a transparent grace of simplicity and purity, which seemed to light his brow with an almost visible radiance, recalling the *Angeli, non Angli*, of St. Gregory's prophetic vision, and all the more winning from its utter unconsciousness. I well remember one day, when I was staying at Long-

cliffe twenty years ago, where his family were then temporarily residing, our taking a long walk together, and my afterwards giving him a copy of Cardinal Wiseman's beautiful tale, *Fabiola*. It struck me even then, though he can have been hardly twelve years old, that there was a close resemblance between his character and that of the youthful hero of the tale, Pancrasius—whose name was once a household word among English Christians, and is still preserved in the dedication of some of our oldest parish churches in London and elsewhere—who suffered when only fourteen in the Diocletian persecution, crowned with the double glory of boyhood and of martyrdom. And indeed, whether then or in after life, Rudolph was just one of those who at the call of duty would have stood unmoved in the midst of the arena, with a sunny smile upon his face, while the hideous cry, *Christianos ad leones*, rang through the Roman amphitheatre. In a letter written when he was only ten years old to his cousin, Admiral Ryder, telling him that he was "tremendously anxious to become a sailor," and wanted to know everything about ships and the sea, he adds, "I intend

to be a very brave sailor, and like Everard [his elder brother] to get the Victoria Cross, if I can. . . . I should like to be in a battle on sea very much indeed."<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen in the sequel that he made no parade of his religion, nor could any one be more conspicuously free from all semblance of unreality or priggishness; he did not talk about his faith but lived it. But his moral was fully equal to his physical courage; he was not more brave than good. There is many a man, and still more many a boy, who will face a roaring battery without flinching, while he cowers in abject dread at the first suspicion of an unworthy sneer. But if there was one specially marked characteristic about Rudolph from earliest boyhood, it was his absolute fearlessness—whether of danger, ridicule, or hardship—in the discharge of duty. He has surely earned, if any ever did, the

<sup>1</sup> He goes on to say that he is very fond of reading "a very nice book with an account of the principal people who got the Victoria Cross"; that he has also been reading *The Three Midshipmen* and *Masterman Ready*, and has read *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Life of Lord Nelson* through twelve times. The letter, which Admiral Ryder justly calls a "charming" one, unfortunately only came into my hands at the last moment, or it should have been inserted at length in the second chapter.

blessing pronounced on those who are not ashamed to confess their Redeemer before men.

Another leading characteristic, which the ensuing narrative will bring out, may be briefly noticed by anticipation here. It is often and aptly observed that, as cowardice and cruelty, so too are tenderness and courage naturally allied; they are the opposite sides of the shield. In Rudolph this ideal union of qualities was remarkably exemplified. No fitter description could be given of his chivalrous nature than in the words of the old Douglas motto, "tender and true." To him Byron's passionate complaint, too often verified, has no application;

" 'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone which fades  
so fast,  
But the tender bloom of heart is gone ere youth itself be  
past."

His sailor life could not but be a rough and roving one, but "the tender bloom" never faded from his face or from his heart. When we last met, some time ago, but after he had already grown into early manhood, and had been several years in the navy, the old boyish sweetness of expression remained unchanged: his mind of course had



developed—he never suffered the keen edge of his intellect to rust—but prolonged and varied contact with the rude realities of life in an active and what he felt himself—thoroughly as he liked it—to be a trying profession, if it had strengthened his character, had not marred its brightness and simplicity. Of him it might be said, as of the three Hebrew boys of old in the midst of the burning fiery furnace, that “no smell of fire had passed upon” him. It was about the same time that Father Lockhart, a very old friend of the family, wrote of him to his mother; “He is a darling boy, with a faith as fresh as a child’s. I am sure he means to be good in no common way. May God bless him! he is a child of many prayers.” Those prayers have indeed been abundantly answered, though not exactly in the way our earthly affection might have prompted. In such hours of darkness we not only learn to realise in its fulfilment the force of the poet’s words,

“ ’Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all; ”

our very affection for our lost ones teaches us something also of a truth yet harder to flesh and blood—that, alike for them and for ourselves, their

departure is not a severance of the bond, but its highest consecration,

“And it is better, for our love’s sake, they  
We love the best should soonest pass away.”

“What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.”

Another remark, of more general scope, will be in place here. It is often objected that Catholic training, however conducive to piety, tends to foster a mean or at least a poor and unmanly type of character; that there is something in it feeble, sneaking, and un-English. Nor am I prepared to deny that there are methods of education in vogue among Catholics, especially on the continent, to which the reproach may with too much reason be applied, though some of the most eminent and successful Catholic educators—such as Lacordaire and Dupanloup—have taken an entirely different line. In accordance with theirs, my own very decided preference has always and growingly been for the Public School, as opposed to what may be called the foreign system of education—by constant *surveillance*—and it is confirmed by all I have witnessed of the working or results of either. Rudolph himself evidently shared

this conviction; he says, for instance, in reference to the arrangements made for the education of one of his nephews; "There can be no doubt he will be ten times the fellow after having been at Eton or Harrow." Be that as it may, however, the point to be noted here is that the objection cannot be urged against Catholic education as such, but only against certain accidental—and in my opinion mistaken—varieties of it. Rudolph, to use a familiar phrase, sucked in Catholicism with his mother's milk. He recurs again and again in his letters to his parents with unfeigned gratitude to his early religious training, and his whole life bore witness to it. While there was no faintest trace of narrowness or intolerance or arrogance about him, and he never obtruded his beliefs on those who did not share them, he was a Catholic to the backbone, and his consistent fidelity to his religion, as will be clear from the ensuing record, was undisguised and unswerving from first to last. Yet I am not so much propounding my own estimate as endorsing that of all who knew him, when I say that a finer, truer, manlier, more thoroughly English type of character, in the best sense of the word, it would be difficult even to

imagine. In the words written by one of his old comrades on hearing of his death ; “ a nobler fellow never stepped.”

Rudolph fell in the daring but desperate expedition—foredoomed from the first to inevitable failure, through no fault of those engaged in it—organized for the relief of General Gordon, of whom it has been justly said that he “ united the courage of a hero to the faith of a saint.” And it is impossible to compare their letters and diaries, to say nothing of a more intimate knowledge, without recognising in many respects a striking similarity of character in the two men. They never met on earth, but on Rudolph’s side there seems to have grown up during those last months of harassing trial and suspense—his mind was peculiarly susceptible of such impressions—some consciousness of that occult sympathy which makes noble natures kin without the need of personal acquaintance. In the first freshness of her overwhelming grief his favourite sister could write, on hearing of the fall of Khartoum and Gordon’s death, barely ten days after the Battle of Abu Klea ; “ This terrible news makes one almost happy that he was taken from us in the hour of victory ; he would

have been almost maddened by the terrible disappointment of arriving *too late*." In those fatal words "too late" is summed up the shameful secret of the reckless, senseless, bootless waste of life and loss of honour involved in the planning of that disastrous Egyptian campaign. Even had the Expedition started a month or six weeks earlier, it would have escaped the worst of the all but insuperable difficulties of that toilsome ascent up the bed of a daily diminishing river, described with graphic minuteness in the "Letters from the Nile."<sup>1</sup> But it was not to be. Under all circumstances no doubt the principle holds good,

"Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori."

But their country is left to make such tardy reparation as she may for the cruel blundering and indecision—lightly noted in these letters and with no touch of bitterness, after the writer's wont—paid for but not redeemed in torrents of the life-blood of her best and bravest sons.

For the greater part of Rudolph's life, while he was far away from home, we are mainly dependent

<sup>1</sup> See below, chap. x.

on his letters, some hundreds of which have been carefully preserved, and I was of course only too glad, as far as possible, to let him tell his story in his own words. The letters are written throughout, like his log-book and diary, in the same clear and beautiful hand, with scarcely a blot or erasure anywhere. Even the few, written when he was a naval cadet on the *Britannia*, which have been kept, are models of style and caligraphy for a boy of twelve. At a later date he sometimes apologises for being obscure or ungrammatical, and in a long series of letters, dashed off *currente calamo*, often under unusual difficulties and almost always in brief intervals of precarious leisure—notably in the closing series of letters from the Nile—an occasional slip of the pen must necessarily occur; but as a rule grammar and construction are as faultless as the exquisite writing. Of the deeper qualities revealed in them abundant evidence will appear by and by.

The duty of delineating a life so exceptionally perfect might well have fallen to worthier hands than mine. To do adequate justice to such a theme the writer must be of like nobility of soul with its subject. This merit only will I venture to claim for myself,

that the task, however imperfectly accomplished, has been throughout a genuine labour of love. Undertaken, not without diffidence, at the desire of those to whose wish it was a pleasure and privilege to defer, it has constantly grown in interest under my hand, as fresh lights were thrown from this side or that on different aspects of the character of one whom to know was to admire and to love, and who left even on the minds of mere chance acquaintances of a day an impression which still remains vivid after many years. And the blame must rest wholly with his biographer, if to very many who in this world knew him not the picture of such a life—recalling as it does at every turn, after the lapse of four long centuries, the lofty chivalrous ideal embodied of old by universal consent in the great historic personality of Bayard, the knight *sans peur et sans reproche*—does not offer at once a powerful attraction and a fresh incentive to all noble deeds. To members of his own, or of the kindred military profession, that lesson will of course come home with the most direct and incisive force, but Rudolph de Lisle has left an example which in its broader outlines all alike may in their measure emulate. Not to all indeed is given

his dauntless spirit of heroism, of enterprise, of endurance, or the call to share his perils on flood or field; but all who will may strive after the same high standard of unselfishness, of singleness of purpose, of unflinching devotion to duty, of the strength of Christian manhood, tempered by the faith, the simplicity, the tenderness of a child.

H. N. O.

*Palm Sunday, 1886.*





# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
GRACEDIEU AND GARENDON . . . . .	I

## CHAPTER II.

RUDOLPH'S EARLY BOYHOOD . . . . .	10
-----------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER III.

THE BRITANNIA . . . . .	19
-------------------------	----

## CHAPTER IV.

THE FLYING SQUADRON . . . . .	28
-------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER V.

FOUR YEARS ON THE CAMELEON . . . . .	44
--------------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER VI.

CRUISING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND PACIFIC . . . . .	77
---	----

## CHAPTER VII.

THE LAST PARTING . . . . .	PAGE 110
----------------------------	-------------

## CHAPTER VIII.

MORAL CHARACTERISTICS . . . . .	123
---------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIOUS FIDELITY . . . . .	138
------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER X.

LETTERS FROM THE NILE . . . . .	152
---------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

VICTORY AND DEATH . . . . .	233
-----------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

REQUIEM SEMPITERNAM . . . . .	246
-------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE WITNESS OF A NOBLE LIFE . . . . .	264
---------------------------------------	-----

# XL.B.52

## MEMOIR.

### CHAPTER I.

#### GRACEDIEU AND GARENDON.

“ The stately homes of England !  
How beautiful they stand,  
Amidst their tall ancestral trees,  
O'er all the pleasant land !  
The deer across their greensward bound,  
Through glade and sunny gleam ;  
And the swan glides past them with the sound  
Of some rejoicing stream.”

*Mrs. Hemans.*

THE subject of this memoir, Rudolph Edward Lisle March Phillipps de Lisle, was born at Gracedieu Manor, on November 23rd, 1853, being the eighth and youngest but one of the sons, and the fourteenth child, of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle of Gracedieu, and afterwards of Garendon Park, in the county of Leicestershire, and of Laura Mary, eldest daughter of Thomas, fourth son of Hugh, fourth Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, and Philippina, Baroness von Lützow,

his wife. He was baptized the same day in the chapel, his sponsors being Lord Feilding, now Earl of Denbigh, and the late Lady Edward Fitzalan Howard. On his father's side he was descended from Fitzazor, a Norman knight who came over with William the Conqueror, from whom he received a considerable grant of land in the Isle of Wight, which remained till the present century in the possession of the family, and hence he took the name *de Insulâ*, or in the English form Lisle, or de Lisle. The de Lisles were never backward in the service of their king and country, and one at least of them, as we shall find further on, was a Crusader. A gentler but not less heroic distinction attaches at a later date to the memory of Lady Alice Lisle, who, in the reign of James II., though herself a staunch loyalist, sheltered, or rather endeavoured to shelter, in her house two Puritans, a preacher and a lawyer, who had been mixed up with Monmouth's rebellion, from the clutches of the infamous Judge Jeffreys. They were discovered, however, and dragged from their hiding-place to execution; and she herself, though between eighty and ninety years old, paid with her life the penalty of this brave act of Christian charity. Jeffreys bullied the jury into convicting her against their will, and the King—who was appealed to at the instance of the Chapter of Winchester—would only consent to commute the sentence of burning to beheading, which

she suffered with serene fortitude in the Winchester market-place. Her attainder was reversed by Parliament in 1689.

The last male descendant of the de Lisle family died in 1819, and his only surviving sister, who married Thomas March Phillipps, of Garendon and Gracedieu, then became its representative, and in 1862 her grandson, Rudolph's father, on succeeding to the estate, resumed the old family name. On his mother's side Rudolph sprang from a no less ancient and illustrious lineage. Fitzponce, third son of Richard, second Duke of Normandy, came over with his cousin, the Conqueror, and his grandson Walter married Margaret, heiress of Clifford Castle, in Herefordshire, from which time their descendants have always borne the name of Clifford.

Those who are familiar with Lord Beaconsfield's novels may recollect his account of Coningsby's visit to "St. Genevieve," the residence of "Mr. Lyle," which combines in a single confused and not very accurate sketch the house and grounds of Garendon with the chapel at Gracedieu. The deer indeed may still be seen in Garendon Park, and the last of the breed of gorgeous Japanese peacocks died only two years ago, and the long rhododendron avenue—which the novelist leaves unnoticed—has lost nothing of its vernal splendours; but his description of the house does not suit well either its former or its present condition,

since it was rebuilt. And he omits altogether the most unique specialty of the wooded slopes of Gracedieu, where the Calvary and the Chapel of Seven Dolours remind the traveller of some sequestered pass in the Tyrol, with its frequent wayside cross, or shrine, or sacred picture to arrest the eye at every turn, while the white-robed procession, wont to wind its way through the woods at Corpus Christi and on the Feast of the Invention of the Cross (May 3rd), would no less vividly recall to his memory the picturesque incidents of foreign Catholic worship. The memorial tower, on a height a little above the Chapel of Our Lady, erected by the county in honour of Mr. de Lisle's second son, Everard, who was shot down by the rebels in the streets of Delhi—just three days after he had earned the Victoria Cross by his gallant feat of storming the Water Bastion—had not of course been built when *Coningsby* appeared in 1844, but it has been a conspicuous object for miles round during the last quarter of a century.<sup>1</sup> Everard's death

<sup>1</sup> It was in this little chapel, after they had prayed together, on the day before his sailing for India, at the age of eighteen, that Everard promised his mother that, in addition to his daily prayers, he would never omit to read a chapter of the Bible or of some religious book—a promise he kept faithfully to the last. At Easter he made a two days' journey of sixty miles in order to receive the Sacraments. Something may be inferred of his general character, and his likeness to Rudolph, from a statement in a letter to his father from R. E. Boyle, of the 46th N.I. Regiment: "I asked a sergeant of the Rifles about him, and the fellow actually burst into tears, and said there was not a man in the corps who would not have willingly died for him."

occurred on September 17th, 1857, when Rudolph was not yet four years old, and he had then been for three years in India. I never saw him myself, but there is said to have been a striking resemblance between them in face as well as in their character and their destiny ; *par nobile fratrum*—brothers in arms as in blood, though the one had finished his career ere the work of the other was well begun—they were alike lovely in their lives and in the manner of their death were not divided.

Rudolph, as we shall see, was one of sixteen children. Of his seven sisters all but one survive him. Mary, born in 1843, lived long enough to give unmistakable signs of high intellectual promise, as well as sweetness of disposition, but she died a very holy death at Gracedieu, October 7th, 1860, in her seventeenth year, and is buried in the chapel crypt. Lady Dingli, then Miss Charlton, who was one of her companions at the convent school at St. Leonard's, says that on her death every girl there seemed to have lost a relation. His eldest sister, Filumena, married, in 1859, Mr., now Sir Frederick, Weld, G.C.M.G., of Chideock in Dorsetshire, Governor of Singapore. The second, Alice, married, in 1873, the Hon. Arthur Strutt, whose premature death, only four years afterwards, owing to a terrible accident, will be in the recollection of many of my readers. He left two children, a boy and girl, of whom mention will be



made again by and by, as they became warmly attached to their uncle Rudolph, and he to them. Winifred, the next daughter, married, in 1863, the late Lord Howard of Glossop ; Margaret, the youngest daughter, is unmarried. The two others, Bertha and Gwendolen, are in religion ; the former entered the Order of the Good Shepherd in 1863, the latter entered the Benedictine Order in 1869. We shall find abundant evidence hereafter of the deep affection subsisting from first to last between Rudolph and his sisters, with all of whom, especially Mrs. Strutt and his youngest sister Margaret, he kept up a constant correspondence during his long periods of absence from England. There is something peculiarly tender and sacred in the relationship of brother and sister, which those should know best who have had to bear the trial of losing it, and nowhere has the sacredness of the bond been more intimately realised than in the family which is now mourning the early death of Rudolph de Lisle. And that loss cannot but be the more keenly felt by his widowed mother and her children, not only from the special affection in which he had ever been justly held, but also because out of nine brothers two only now remain, Edwin, a year older than Rudolph, and Gerard, five years younger. Ambrose, the eldest, born in 1834, who came into possession of Garendon on his father's death, March 5th, 1878, himself died less than six years afterwards

(November 27th, 1883), leaving two sons, Everard, the present owner of the estate, and Bernard. He is buried in the crypt of the chapel at Gracedieu. The heroic death of the next brother, Everard, in the Indian Mutiny, has already been referred to, and there will be occasion to speak of him again in a subsequent chapter. Reginald, born in 1839, died in his sixth year, and Bernard, born in 1846, in his ninth, through injury to his spine from a fall on the ice. Osmund, who was born a year later, died at the age of twenty-one (October 17th, 1869), at the Agricultural College at Cirencester, from pleurisy. He had exhibited from boyhood great force and tenderness of character, and an unobtrusive saintliness of life, which could not fail to impress his schoolfellows at Oscott as well as his own family, though he was free from any taint of arrogance or asperity, and always seemed to think every one better than himself. Rudolph both revered and loved him. On receiving at Sydney, on Christmas Day, the news of his unexpected death, he wrote to his mother and his sister Alice that "the bare thought of it crushed him down," and that he could hardly bear the mention of his brother's name, or even bear to write about him, adding, however, that it is "a relief to think of the life he led, and that, should we, like him, live a holy life, we shall meet again once more in a better world." And he goes on to assure his mother of his fixed resolve, with God's grace, to

follow in the same footsteps as Osmund walked in before him, that when he comes to die he may be equally well prepared. And he meant what he said ; he was barely sixteen then, but he did not forget his good resolution in after years. And if Osmund's example left so deep an impression on a brother six years his junior, and who had seen hardly anything of him for the last three years, we may readily conceive how bitter a trial the loss of such a son must have been to his parents. The next brother, Frank, born in 1851, whom I remember last seeing as a bright, handsome boy of sixteen, at Garendon, went out to Australia, and died there, within a few months of a singularly happy marriage, in May 1883, from heart disease. Rudolph's death followed two years later ; and thus of nine brothers seven have passed away, for the most part in boyhood, or in the prime of life, all under the age of fifty, some dying from the effect of fatal accidents, and two being killed in battle in distant lands. It is a stainless and honourable record, but, like the Prophet's scroll of old, it is full of "lamentation and mourning and woe."

" They grew in beauty side by side,  
They filled one home with glee ;  
Their graves are severed far and wide,  
By mount, and stream, and sea."

Four of the seven had gone before their father to the grave. He died on March 5th, 1878, at Garendon,

after a long and trying illness, borne with exemplary Christian patience, through which Rudolph, who chanced happily to be at home at the time, helped to nurse him with the utmost care and tenderness. His body lies in the nave of the unfinished abbey church of St. Mary's, in Charnwood Forest, which he had himself founded some forty years before. This is not the place to dwell on his consistent course of active but unostentatious piety, or on his constant efforts by speech, by writing, by personal influence, and above all by organizing an Association of Prayer for the purpose, to promote the great end which had been from boyhood the ruling passion and aim of his life; the restoration of the broken unity of Christendom.<sup>1</sup> He was indeed "a man simple, upright, and fearing God," and his life's work cannot be better summed up than in the words of Holy Writ inscribed on his mortuary card: "I have loved the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth." "And not for them only do I pray. . . . that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us."

<sup>1</sup> Mr. de Lisle published, besides several devotional manuals, the *Little Gradual*, designed to promote the revival of Gregorian chants, in which he was greatly interested, as well as a work on Mahometanism regarded as the Antichrist of Old Testament Prophecy, and a very remarkable essay, now unfortunately out of print, *On the Future Unity of Christendom*.

## CHAPTER II.

### RUDOLPH'S EARLY BOYHOOD.

“ Oh, dearest, dearest Boy ! my heart  
For better love would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn.”

*Wordsworth.*

IT was amid such scenes and associations that Rudolph de Lisle spent the opening years of boyhood which shape the character for life. He was literally, as well as metaphorically, “a son of the Crusaders,” and he seems instinctively to have grasped from the first the high responsibilities of his heritage of an old ancestral name musical with splendid memories of an immemorial past. The youngest but two of a large family, and for more than six years actually the youngest boy, he was from the first a child of promise and of many prayers. My own earliest recollection of him is as an engaging, fair-haired child of four years old, in a red cassock and surplice, serving

as acolyte in the beautiful chapel at Gracedieu. And it was about the same time that he began to exhibit that love of the sea and taste for a seafaring life which rapidly grew into a distinct vocation, as Mozart already at four years old gave promise of his future eminence as a musician. His parents had taken him for some weeks to Whitby, and he used while there to go in boats with his elder brothers, and thus he first imbibed a love for the sea which never left him. From that time forward he would constantly employ himself in making little boats, and in this way he gradually became a skilful carpenter. We shall find how, in one of his letters from the Nile, shortly before the end, he thanks his mother for having so early put tools into his hands, and encouraged him in acquiring a craft he had on many occasions found most serviceable.

Nor was his childhood less significant in its ethical promise of the future. His nurse, who had taken charge of him when only a year old, and who remained with the family till he was quite grown up, declares that she never once knew him tell an untruth or practise any sort of deception on her or on anybody else ; he was always frank and open, and prompt to acknowledge anything he had done wrong. His chief, if not only, fault, which more or less clung to him through life, and is indeed a common, if not inseparable, failing of ardent and chivalrous natures, was

a certain hastiness of temper; as a very young child he was apt to get into a violent passion, but it was soon over, and he *was never known to sulk or bear malice to any one*—and here again the child was father to the man. He was always of a most generous disposition, and often had to be checked in his readiness to give away all the little he possessed of his own.

An incident which occurred when he was only eight years old, while the family were still at Gracedieu, serves at once to illustrate his early nautical tastes and his open-hearted generosity of temper. He had made himself a little toy-boat, and as his elder brothers were not at leisure to help him to float it he ran to the gardener's cottage and desired a little girl about his own age to come with him to the pond to help. The child was frightened, and did not like to go near the water. "But you shall go," said Rudolph, "I will make you;" and she went, and held the string for him while he waded into the shallow water to adjust something that was wrong, but in her terror she dropped the string, letting the boat loose, and ran away, and at the moment he was very angry. For the next few days she kept out of his way, though he was on the look-out for her, not at all for the purpose she feared, and the first time he could find her he brought two oranges in his hand, saying, "I am afraid I was very cross the other

day ; will you take these to show that you forgive me ?" This little girl is now a married woman—Mrs. Hopper—living at Shepshed, and I heard this story from her own lips, with others of a later date about "Mr. Rudolph," for whom she has ever felt the warmest admiration.

The services in Gracedieu Chapel were solemnised with great care and reverence, a *missa cantata* being usually sung at nine every morning, and Rudolph, as we have already seen, began quite as a child to serve as acolyte. He was very fond also of joining in the chanting, and retained through life his preference for Gregorian music, as well as his intelligent and minute interest in the offices and ceremonies of the Church, of which abundant evidence will occur in the sequel.

In 1864, two years after his father's death, Mr. de Lisle gave up Gracedieu to his eldest son, and went for a time with his family to reside at Longcliffe, one of his farms in Charnwood Forest, in order to be close at hand to superintend the alterations he was making in the house at Garendon. The farmhouse is situated in the midst of plantations, and during the year and a half of their residence there Rudolph began shooting rabbits and wood-pigeons, and thus took his first lessons in the art in which he became such an adept afterwards, and which gained him in Beshika Bay the sobriquet of "the demon of the marsh." He shot his first woodcock at Ugbrooke, when only



twelve years old. He had begun still earlier to make sketches of any point of view in the picturesque scenery of Gracedieu which caught his eye, and he had from the first a keen eye for beautiful scenery. This taste for drawing, as well as his taste for music, he continued, as we shall see, to cultivate to the last. It represented the gentle and æsthetic, as his fondness for field sports represented the daring and adventurous, element of his nature. I have referred in the preface to my own recollection of him during a visit to Longcliffe at Easter 1865. In the following September he joined his elder brothers at Oscott, where, however, he only stayed a twelvemonth. There he made his first Communion, and there, on June 26th, 1866, he was confirmed by Bishop Ullathorne—whose estimate of him will be quoted further on—when he chose for himself the names of Aloysius Sebastian, as though in unconscious token of his noble simplicity of life, and its premature but glorious end.<sup>1</sup> He was prepared for his first Communion and Confirmation by the Rev. Edmund Knight (now Bishop of Shrewsbury), whose letters to him in after years, when he was in the Navy, bear witness to the affectionate interest he never ceased to take in his welfare.

Dr. Northcote was then President of Oscott. On

<sup>1</sup> It is customary for Catholics to take at Confirmation the name of some Saint, whom they choose for their special patron.

hearing, years afterwards, of Rudolph's death at Abu Klea, he wrote to his brother Edwin, also an old pupil, to express his "sincerest sympathy," adding: "It is a long time since I saw Rudolph—seven or eight years, I think—when he was staying with some uncle at Torquay [his great-uncle, the late Mr. Henry March Phillipps]; but he will always live in my memory as the bright, noble-looking little fellow who stood at my knee on one or two Exhibition days at Oscott, and clapped his little hands and ran forward to greet his elder brothers coming up for their prizes." His three elder brothers, Osmund, Frank, and Edwin, were at Oscott at the time, and they had all gained prizes on the occasion referred to, as he also had himself; this reminiscence of Dr. Northcote's of his eager rejoicing in their success is doubly characteristic of him. He cared ever for others more than for himself, and he cared very specially for his brothers and sisters. Some of his schoolboy letters of that date are still preserved, and they are full, not only of inquiries and surmises about the rabbits and partridges, as was natural, but also about every minutest detail of home life, and whatever concerned the happiness of any member of the family. His Christmas holidays of 1865 were the first spent at Garendon, whither they had moved from Longcliffe after the completion of the repairs, on St. Andrew's Day. He returned to Oscott the following January, but left finally at the

midsummer holidays in July, and stayed two months at home before going to the Naval Academy at Gosport to prepare for the *Britannia*. He was not yet thirteen, but that was his first step towards entering on the career he had chosen, in the naval service, of which he proved in the event so bright an ornament.

There was already perhaps something about him of thoughtfulness beyond his years,

“Thoughtful even then because of the excess  
Of boyhood’s rich abounding happiness.”

Certainly he always took thought for others, and if there is any truth in the ill-natured saying that “children are never kind,” it did not apply to him. There was probably hardly a creature about Gracedieu or Garendon in those days—I purposely use a word including the dumb creation—that had not learnt to love and trust “Mr. Rudolph,” with his frank bearing and generous sympathy and sunny smile. Twenty years afterwards, on reading the newspaper report of his gallant death at Abu Klea, one who at this time was a lad in the parish school at Whitwick and one of the Gracedieu choir-boys, and who had never met him since—Mr. Thomas Brotherhood—wrote from Glasgow, where he is now a schoolmaster, to Mr. Edwin de Lisle, in terms sufficiently indicative of the strong and permanent impression left on his

mind :—" I cannot express the sorrow I feel at the sad end of him whom twenty years ago I loved so much. It is long since I have seen him, but his memory will ever live in my heart." But Rudolph, with all his gentleness and care for others, was no overgrown baby or precocious little man, but a genuine boy, with all a boy's keen relish for fun and frolic and daring exploits, as cheery, brave, and high-spirited as he was good ; sensitive and quick-tempered, but open as the day—prompt to take offence, but prompter still to forgive—ardent in his friendships, but incapable of cherishing a grudge, he was a universal favourite alike at home and at school. There was much about him of the making of a saint : nothing whatever of a sneak or a pietist or a prig. No force of example or constraint could induce him to do what he knew or suspected to be wrong, but it may be doubted whether anybody was ever offended—while many were reclaimed—by his fearless persistency in doing right. His moral courage had no slightest taint of Pharisaism in it. And this rare combination of qualities so commonly divorced characterized him through life. What he was as a schoolboy and a "middy," we shall find him still in those last trying months at the Cataracts of the Nile. Too often indeed the poet's words come true ;

" Shades of the prison house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy."

But it need not be so ; there are chosen souls on whose inner gaze, as they pass from youth to manhood, "the vision splendid," which is their baptismal birthright, never "fades into the light of common day." Rudolph carried with him in its freshness to the close of his mortal agony the grace and elasticity of his boyhood.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE BRITANNIA.

“Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,  
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
Dark-heaving ;—boundless, endless, and sublime—  
The image of Eternity—the throne  
Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone  
Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward ; from a boy  
I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me  
Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear,  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.”

*Byron.*

ON October 1st, 1866, Rudolph, who was not quite thirteen, was taken by his elder brother Osmund to the Royal Naval and Military Academy at Gosport, where there were then ninety boys

preparing for admission into the Britannia. Three weeks later the Headmaster, the Rev. Edward Burney, wrote to his father: "We are very much pleased with him; his general conduct is exemplary, and he is very attentive to his studies." This praise is repeated in subsequent letters, while Mr. Burney adds that "he is a most amiable, good boy, with excellent abilities," and that he fully expects him to take a first class when the time comes for him to pass out of the Britannia,—an expectation which, as we shall see, was not disappointed. During his stay at the Naval Academy, he generally spent his Sundays with the aged Dr. Baldaconi, an Italian priest then in charge of the Catholic Mission at Gosport, who became greatly attached to him, and used to call him "the angel of the congregation." But it must not be supposed that his religion was put on and off like a garment kept for Sundays, and unfit for the wear and tear of daily life; far from it. The position was at first a trying one for so young a boy, who had lived at home until the last year, which he spent with three elder brothers at a Catholic College. Here he had no brothers to look after him, and none of his school-fellows were of his own faith. But without making himself singular, or in any way holding aloof from their companionship, he did not flinch for a moment from the consistent practice of his religious duty.





It was at once remarked by the boys in his room that he would never omit, night or morning, to kneel down by his bedside and say his prayers; and that is often, under such circumstances, an act of signal courage. And he showed tact as well as courage in his way of dealing with a more serious difficulty, with which the readers of *Eric* will be familiar.

There were several boys sleeping in the same room with him, when he first went to Mr. Burney's, of whom he was the youngest, and the conversation—as is too commonly the case among young boys—was apt to be of a kind equally novel and repulsive to one brought up as he had been. Anything like direct interference on his part would of course have been worse than useless, and his parents, who had received a hint of the matter from some other quarter, were urged by their informant to complain to the Headmaster or to remove him. There were obvious objections to either course, and Rudolph had himself meanwhile discovered a more excellent way. He proposed to his room-fellows that, instead of talking after they were in bed, they should tell each other stories in turn, and he offered to lead the way by telling them a story out of his favourite *Arabian Nights*, which he had had at his fingers' ends from childhood. They were naturally delighted with the idea, and listened eagerly night after night, as he went on at their request, like the Princess



Shahrazad of old, telling one story after another, till at last he suggested that they also should take their turn. And thus the stories completely beat what Dr. Farrar calls "the vile element" out of the field, and there was no renewal of evil talk while he was there.

Rudolph came home to Garendon a week before Christmas for his holidays, which he spent chiefly in skating and shooting, but returned to Gosport by Mr. Burney's advice on January 7th, 1867, to prepare for his approaching examination. On the following, April 9th he passed in the first class, sixth out of sixty-five candidates for admission to the Britannia training-ship, which he joined at Dartmouth on May 2nd, after a short holiday at home. He remained in the Britannia till July 1868, and used often during that period to stay from Saturday to Monday at Ugbrooke Park, near Chudleigh, the seat of his relative, Lord Clifford, where he speedily became a great favourite with all the family, and he continued through life to regard Ugbrooke as a kind of second home. He enjoyed these visits the more as he got a day's shooting on the Saturday during the season. Sometimes he spent the Sunday with his great-uncle, Mr. Henry March Phillipps, at Torquay, and there grew up a warm attachment between them, in spite of the great difference of age. In his first letter home

from the Britannia he speaks with characteristic modesty—he always underrated himself, both morally and intellectually—of fearing Mr. Burney thought too highly of his powers in expecting him to take a first class at the end of his course there. He mentions in the same letter having been with other cadets to see “Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp,” at a theatre improvised for their express benefit at Dartmouth, and of having had “a very long row in the boats a few days ago; we rowed so far that my arms were ready to drop off.” But he had evidently enjoyed it; he adds at once that “there are about fifteen boats for the boys to row in, not great, big, long, lumbering boats, but nice light gigs.” Not less characteristic in a different way are his “many, many thanks” to his mother for the *Garden of the Soul* she had sent him<sup>1</sup>—“I think it is the most complete one I ever saw”—and his assurance to her that, though the Catholic cadets, of whom there were five on board, had been prevented by the weather from going on shore to hear Mass that Sunday, he had used the prayers for Mass himself. In another letter, a month later, he says: “I cannot manage ever to go to Communion more than once

<sup>1</sup> A Catholic Prayer-book in very general use. This copy no doubt got worn out, for another was given him nine years later (April 15th, 1876), when he left the Greenwich Royal Naval College, which is now in my possession, and shows plainly enough from its well-thumbed condition how constantly it was in hand.

a month, which I always do. One Sunday I could not even go to Mass on account of the rain. I do my best always to go to Mass and the Sacraments as often as I am able, so I cannot do more than I am able ;"—a phrase which not unfrequently recurs in various connections in letters of a later date, marking his fixed determination always to do the best he could. In this same letter he tells how a midshipman who had cut "the broad arrow" on a cadet's nose had been restored to his place in the navy without any punishment, which he thinks "a horrid shame." He adds: "I am told that in almost every sea-going vessel they cut an anchor upon one's arm and rub gunpowder into the cut, but that would not matter because it would not be seen. So I suppose after I have been in a sea-going ship, if I ever come home, you will see things cut on my arm. It hurts like anything having gunpowder rubbed into a cut: it makes it indelible." This letter, which is a long one, is full of comments of all kinds on home matters—not forgetting "the rabbits"—and of his joyful anticipation of the approaching summer holidays: "The time passes awfully quickly on board. I cannot believe that I shall be coming home in about six weeks," but "it is jolly they are going to give us ten days extra holidays this time," lasting till September 16th. His keen eye for natural beauty had detected from the first the loveliness of

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the neighbourhood of Dartmouth, and the rhododendrons in full flower in his uncle's garden at Torquay remind him of the glorious wealth of rhododendron bloom at Garendon and Gracedieu, and then he asks if the Corpus Christi procession is to be held that year.

He came home at the end of July, and spent his holidays at Garendon. I was staying there part of the time, and that is my latest recollection of him as a boy. None who knew him then will readily forget that lithe and graceful form, and face singularly beautiful, where the delicacy and refinement of feature inherited through long generations of an ancient ancestry was sun-crowned with a lustrous purity of expression peculiar to himself. He sang exquisitely, then as afterwards, and I well remember his clear, sweet boy's voice ringing through the long picture-gallery used at Garendon as a drawing-room. The next Christmas and Easter holidays he also spent at home, and then remained on the *Britannia* till after his final examination was over at the end of July 1868, when he joined the *Victory* at Portsmouth. Writing to his father a week before, he expresses his sincere hope that he shall do well, adding with his usual diffidence, "but I cannot do better than I can." The result, however, fully justified Mr. Burney's prediction of the previous year. He passed fifth out of fifty-six boys examined,

gaining a first-class certificate, as well as prizes for French and drawing.

During his fifteen months on the *Britannia*, Rudolph formed many lifelong attachments among his fellow-cadets, as afterwards among the young "middies" on the same ship with him, the and strength of which may be inferred from the tone of letters written to him by his friends in after years, often beginning in such terms as "My dearest Rudolph," or "My own de Lisle," and bearing emphatic testimony to the influence for good he had exercised over them. One of them, for instance, who had been moved into a different ship, says he wishes he could return to him, for he cannot keep good for a fortnight together without his help. Among the most intimate of these early friendships was that with Lord Maurice Fitzgerald, the Duke of Leinster's second son, who was with him on the *Britannia*, and afterwards on the flag-ship *Liverpool*, in the Flying Squadron, but subsequently left the service. Rudolph went to Ireland to visit him at Johnstown Castle during his last stay in England, in October 1882.

There is one subject touched on in his last letter from the *Britannia* which for us, as we read it now, in the light of later events, has an ominous significance: "I wish to send you a letter which I received from Lord Denbigh a day or two ago. He is going

to get me a sword, and he wants me to send him my coat of arms, crest, motto, and also my full initials, &c., to be engraved on it. I have written to thank him very much for it;”—his gratitude for any kindness shown him was always exuberant and lasting; he never forgot such things, and would recur to them years afterwards. The sword which Lord Denbigh presented to him on leaving the *Britannia* was inscribed with the motto, “*Pugno pro Deo, Patriâ, Justitiâ.*” It was found on him, as will appear in the sequel, after the battle of Abu Klea, though he had not then been able to use it, and was restored with other relics by Captain May to his mother, who now has it in her possession. And thus it recalls to memory at once the beginning and the end, the close of those happy days of schooling for life’s rough work on the training-ship at Dartmouth, amid friendly faces and bright hopes and the rich summer foliage of the lovely South Devon coast—I have known and loved it from a child—and that desert battlefield thousands of miles away, on the scorching Nubian sands, where sixteen years later he girt his sword on for his last encounter, and the sun of life went down at noonday, and the strife was over, and conquest sealed in death.

“ And the sea still laughs to the rosy shells ashore,  
And the shore still shines in the lustre of the wave;  
But the joyaunce and the beauty of the boyish days is o’er,  
And many of the beautiful lie quiet in the grave.”

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FLYING SQUADRON.

“ Yet beautiful and bright he stood,  
As born to rule the storm,  
A creature of heroic blood,  
A proud, though childlike form.”

*Mrs. Hemans.*

A SEAFARING life is a life of perpetual change. The sailor has no fixed abode or settled home, whose “home is on the deep,” or, if for the moment he seems to have one, he will soon be rudely undeceived, like the two credulous mariners in the Arabian tale who struck anchor and pitched their tents on what they fondly imagined was solid soil, only to find their island—which, indeed, was a huge whale—heaving and splashing beneath them. This toilsome and uncertain life Rudolph, though “the spell of home affection” lay ever deep within his heart, had deliberately chosen, and it suited well his bold, adventurous spirit. He had even larger opportunities than is usual in



such cases, in the earlier part of his career as midshipman, for seeing the manners and cities of many men, from his going round the world in the first Flying Squadron, and his quick intelligence took note of all he saw. And the habit formed at the beginning, and steadily adhered to throughout as matter of conscience and affection—though the mere labour of writing was always irksome to him—of sending home letters by almost every mail,—and long letters too, full of detailed information and ready comment on all that interested him—enables us to follow the course of his wanderings and to trace the process of mental development, as his character expanded with a natural and healthy growth, but with no break of moral continuity. What his letters do *not* contain, are such anecdotes illustrative of his own merits or achievements as were occasionally gleaned from him in conversation by a kind of Socratic cross-questioning, or learnt on the testimony of others. Enough of them are recorded to serve as samples of his habitual line of conduct, but that is all. A noble reserve, not so much studied as instinctive, forbade or rather rendered it impossible to him to seek credit for himself. He would have been honestly surprised to find that anybody thought he deserved it.

On September 2nd, 1868, he was transferred from the Victory to H.M.S. Bristol, and he wrote next day to his mother to express his satisfaction that, instead



of going to the West Indies, they were to go "to that delightful station, the Mediterranean." He had just been keeping his first watch on board, from 4 to 8 p.m., and "did not mind it at all, except that you are not allowed to lean against anything or sit down for a single moment, but are obliged to keep pacing the deck all the time." His first night watch he had been excused, and so "I had one good night's rest anyhow, if I don't get another for some time." He adds: "We 'turn out' at 5.30 a.m. every morning, have breakfast 8 a.m., an 'attempt at luncheon' at 12, and a sort of 'tea-dinner' at about 5 p.m., and then we 'turn in' 9 p.m. about." He means to try and make some sketches when in the Mediterranean, and will take good care to write whenever he has an opportunity, and meanwhile hopes his brothers "are going right and left into the partridges, and enjoying themselves right well." On the 8th the Bristol moved to Plymouth, and that morning at 7 he fell overboard from the main chains with all his clothes on, but speedily rose to the surface, and was picked up by a boat and on board again in a minute, "with nothing worse than a ducking." On the 10th they sailed for Gibraltar, and arrived there after a very rough passage on the 27th, but were ordered off at once to Malaga, where an insurrection had broken out, to protect British interests, much to Rudolph's disappointment, as he had hoped to make several sketches of the Rock of Gibraltar: he

had already made four sketches on the voyage. However, he was impressed with the beauty of the cathedral at Malaga and of the mountains; of the Spaniards his impression was far from favourable: "I am perfectly disgusted with the nation altogether, and think that they are the most loathsome people I ever saw; they all look a set of cut-throats." In two days the Bristol returned to Gibraltar, and he wrote a full description of the place to his sister Alice. They had had some very rough weather, which made him feel uncomfortable, but he had never been regularly seasick. They were ordered off to Malta three weeks later, and arrived after a fair voyage on November 8th. He writes from Malta in excellent spirits, describing among other things a long ride he has had with two of his fellow-midshipmen, but his experience of the Maltese led him to modify his previous estimate of Spanish character: "I told you that the Spaniards were the most loathsome of creatures, they are stunning people in comparison with the Maltese, who are the most brutal scoundrels that ever existed. They would as soon stab a fellow as look at him." He cites some ugly illustrations of this amiable propensity, but it must of course be remembered that these pungent criticisms on national character represent only the first impressions of a boy not yet fifteen, though observant and of keen intelligence. Rudolph was often at Malta in after years, and became, as we shall

find, a general favourite there. On this occasion they stayed barely three weeks, before receiving orders to proceed to Syracuse. His next letter dated from Naples gives an elaborate description of Syracuse, Messina, and Pompeii—which last place he had visited with a party of middies and cadets—showing a remarkable familiarity with the local history, for one whose training for the Navy had afforded such very slight opportunities for any classical studies. But he always did his best to acquaint himself with the points of historical interest at any place that lay in his way, as will be seen when he comes to speak of Rome and Athens. Plato says somewhere that men see only what they bring eyes with them to see, and Rudolph never omitted to have his eyes about him. In another letter he describes his ascent of Vesuvius, and how the appearance of the lava disappointed him: “We had to ramble over it for more than a mile and a half. It is not half such jolly stuff as you would imagine: it looks exactly like a lot of thick mud all heaped up.” He adds, however, that Naples is nearly all built of lava, and is a most beautiful city, and he kept some pieces of it from Vesuvius to bring home. On their way to Maddalena they had a tremendous squall lasting two days—the most unpleasant he had ever known—and this time he was thoroughly sick, and was “not at all ashamed of it,” but he treats the remembrance with his usual cheeriness. They spent

Christmas Day at Maddalena—"the most wretched place I ever went to"—and it was his first Christmas away from home, as well as the first on which, owing to the distance, he was unable to go to church. They did justice to the social aspect of the festival on board, in the consumption of turkeys and plum pudding.

From Maddalena they went to Algiers, where he was charmed with the loveliness of the scenery, and relates at some length his first visit to a mosque. From Algiers the Bristol returned to Gibraltar, and thence proceeded to Lisbon, where a great disappointment awaited him. He had hoped to go back to England in it, but was informed that he, with some of the others, was to be drafted into the Channel Squadron, and he accordingly had to join the Penelope, while fifteen of his comrades went home in the Bristol. But he wisely resolved "to grin and bear it," and goes on to recount the kindness of Admiral Ryder, a relation of his family, and then gives a humorous description of a day's snipe-shooting with his friend Lord M. Fitzgerald, when both of them very nearly got buried in the marsh. He was naturally growing home-sick after nearly a year's absence, and at the end of April the Penelope did return to England, and he secured ten days' leave of absence in May, which might apparently have been extended for a fortnight longer out

for some official blundering. However he made the best of it, after his wont, and writes to his father on returning to Plymouth: "All I can say is that I enjoyed my short little visit very much indeed, and a great deal more than I can express on paper. I was so charmed to see you all again, although I am afraid that it will be a great deal longer this time than the last. . . . I never enjoyed myself more at home, although the weather on the whole was not the most pleasant. But I had the chief enjoyment, which was of seeing you all and so well, with the exception of poor dear A——, who has a dreadful cold." I just missed him on that occasion, having been at Garendon shortly before, at the time of the Gracedieu procession, when I met Frank for the last time before his leaving England for Australia.

Rudolph was for three weeks on the Liverpool, and was then drafted into H.M.S. Barrosa, one of the six ships of the first Flying Squadron organized by the Admiralty for the purpose of visiting her Majesty's distant possessions, and relieving the ships on the various stations whose period of commission had expired, supplying their place by one of their own number. It sailed from Plymouth on June 19, 1869, and returned on November 15, 1870. But the Barrosa became disabled at Yokohama in April, and Rudolph was then transferred to the Liverpool, the flag-ship, commanded by Admiral

Hornby. The Squadron visited in succession Bahia, Rio, Monte Video, and other points on the South American coast, the Cape of Good Hope, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Vancouver Island, Honolulu, Valparaiso, and touched a second time at Bahia on its return. Rudolph's first letter after leaving England is dated from Bahia. He had been enchanted with the appearance of Madeira, of which, however, he had only a passing glimpse, as they did not cast anchor in the harbour of Funchal. "Madeira is the most beautiful island I have ever seen, and we saw it on the most beautiful day; the sky was splendid, and the different hues of the clouds, combined with the fresh colour of the island, backed with a splendid blue sky, gave the island a most splendid appearance. Talk of an Italian sky, it was not to be compared with the one I saw at Madeira." Their fare, after leaving Madeira, had not been sumptuous—"nothing but salt horse and biscuit for dinner, salt pork (like shoe-leather), being extra salted for the hot weather, with tea, without milk or anything, and biscuit for breakfast and tea, and only on Sundays any fresh meat. You cannot imagine how disagreeable it is living on salt provisions, but of course now we are in harbour we shall soon be having fresh. But in spite of all I don't think that I have lost much in weight since I have been out." He treats his own discomforts

lightly enough, but he goes on to speak of being "dreadfully uneasy" about the illness of his sister Alice, and to make minute inquiries about the ailments of other members of the family. In his next letter, from Rio, he dwells on the beauty of the scenery, and wishes he could have got two days' leave to reach the top of the Sugar-Loaf Mountain, which had only twice been ascended—once by an Englishman, once by an American—but he had to content himself with a day's ride into the country with a fellow-middy; "I never saw such beautiful foliage, and the fragrance of the lime-trees, with which the country abounds, makes a ride most delicious. All you have to do when you want some food is to stop your horse, dismount, pick what you want, and go on again. You can hardly tell the difference between the butterfly and the humming-bird: the latter is so small that you take it for one of the former." He goes on to describe the Botanical Gardens, with "a most splendid avenue of palm-trees, nearly all about 100 feet high," and the town, which last he did not admire, and adds a significant detail; "It is by no means uncommon to see a dead nigger floating down to the sea by the ship. They are cared as much about as dogs." The next letter, dated "Monte Video, September 9th," is chiefly taken up with a graphic description of a terrific gale one night, during his "morning watch,"



when a man from the *Phœbe*—one of the other ships of the Squadron—had fallen overboard and been lost. “In the meanwhile we had to send down topgallant and royal yards and brace topgallant masts, and my station being at the fore topmast-head, of course I had to go up there to look after the yards, &c., being sent down, and I know that I could hardly get up, it was blowing so hard.”

That is his last letter from the South American coast. The next is dated from “Simon’s Bay, Cape of Good Hope, October 4th.” It contains an entry to which we may have occasion to recur in another connection later on: “To-day, Sunday, I got leave from the flag-ship for the Catholics to go ashore to church, and you will be glad to hear I went to my religious duties.<sup>1</sup> It was the first time we have had the opportunity since we left England, so of course we were all very glad to go. I don’t think there is a single other Catholic officer in the fleet, myself excepted. I went in charge of the party.” They had a stormy passage of forty-one days from the Cape to Melbourne, first sighting land on November 23, his sixteenth birthday, which marked the completion of more than half his brief career. At Sydney a month later he received on Christmas Eve the wholly unexpected tidings of his brother Osmund’s death, and wrote to his sister Alice the touching letter which

<sup>1</sup> To Confession and Communion.



has been quoted in a former chapter. One characteristic extract may be added here :—" I hope, my darling Alice, that you are quite well, and have nothing the matter at all, although I am afraid that this crushing blow will have some effect on you. But I hope you will really take the greatest care of yourself, for should anything happen to you, or mamma, or dear papa, while I am away, I am afraid that, *if* ever I returned to England, it would be with a broken heart, or I should never see England again." He did not then expect to return home for three years. To his mother he writes by the same mail in a similar strain, both letters proving unmistakably the depth of his sorrow at his brother's death. Such words as the following might mean little or nothing in the mouth of some simpering sentimentalist ; coming from a brave, high-spirited boy of sixteen, beloved by his messmates and almost worshipped by "the blue-jackets" under his control, who thoroughly enjoyed the active adventurous career he had chosen, and who was never known to be otherwise than scrupulously truthful, they mean a good deal :—" I cannot help thinking what a wretched place this world is, and that it is full of disappointments and trials ; there are only a few reasons for which I care for this life, and *you* know what they are. The only thing that consoles me is to think what a blessing it is to have a mamma like you. I am sure that we are all greatly blessed. . . . I hope for

the future, myself, I shall not be any more trouble to you, for this has been a new and bitter example, which has really brought me to myself. I cannot express the kindness Captain Gibson showed to me when he broke the sad news to me. He did it with all possible delicacy. I must say that so terrible was the blow and so unexpected that I could not speak for some time. . . . Would to God I had led such a blameless life as he ; although I have not committed the most deadly sins, yet I must say my language is nothing like as good as it might be. However, from the day I heard the news (yesterday) just as I was going to a ball, a new leaf has been turned over." One who had been suddenly arrested in a course of wild and vicious dissipation could hardly have said more, and Rudolph's boyhood had been a singularly pure and simple one, the fitting prelude to a noble life. But a sensitive conscience is the privilege of those who are prompt to listen to its voice.

After leaving Sydney the Flying Squadron touched at Hobart Town, Melbourne, and Wellington, but there were no mails for England, and the next letter is dated from Auckland on February 4th. At Wellington Rudolph had met with a very cordial welcome, as the brother-in-law of Mr. (now Sir Frederick) Weld, who had been very popular there as Governor. At Yokohama he wrote his last letter from the *Barrosa*, which was left there, while he was

to return home in the Liverpool, the flag-ship. He regretted the change of ship, as he had been very "comfortable on the Barrosa in every way," and was very sorry to part with his messmates, as were they at his leaving; he speaks warmly of the kindness of Captain Lewis Moore, and of the second lieutenant, Mr. Bellett, the latter of whom had insisted on giving up his cabin to him when he was ill, and sleeping himself in the steerage. Rudolph, in acknowledgment of his kindness, made him a large painting of the Barrosa under sail, with four studding-sails set. There were, however, two redeeming points about the change into the Liverpool. He would get back to England within the year, and he would meanwhile be on the same ship with his great friend, Lord Maurice Fitzgerald, with whom he had managed to get a day's snipe and pigeon-shooting while they were at Yokohama. His grief for his brother's death was no mere passing sentiment. He returns again and again to the subject in his letters, and in one written on May 22, from Vancouver Island, where he received a photograph of Osmund and a sermon of Dr. Northcote's on his death, he makes a remark which may be commended to the notice of many much older than he then was, and who ought to know better, on what is a too common but essentially heathenish way of speaking of the dead. He had called Osmund "poor fellow," but at once corrects

himself: "I know that I ought not to be calling him 'poor,' for I am sure that he is now happy for ever; he is to be envied, not to be pitied." He goes on to mention, having been to his Easter duties at Yokohama, and adds:—"It was a very nice church, and there was a very good choir—Gregorian chant; it was the nicest service I have been to since I left England. I also went twice to church in Holy Week, and took the Catholics with me. Latterly in the *Barrosa* I was sent by myself in charge; in New Zealand and Australia another officer was sent also, as the commanding officer was afraid of their running, but I used to tell him that I was certain they would not run whilst going to church, and so he let me go alone with them, and I never lost a man. I used to object to any one else going, for it was disagreeable having a Protestant asking me all sorts of questions about the service, &c." The fact is that he had the men completely in hand; young as he was, they not only liked but respected him. On one occasion, for instance, quite early in his career as midshipman (not mentioned in his letters), they got to church late, when the Mass was partly over; and, on their beginning to move at the end, he stopped them, saying they had not fulfilled their obligation, and must stay for another Mass, and they quietly complied. But there will be an opportunity for returning to this point by and by. On their passage across the Pacific, a midshipman

from the Scylla fell overboard and was drowned; he had been with Rudolph on the Britannia and the Bristol, and he speaks with deep feeling of his sudden death, the more so as it had occurred on his birthday.

From Vancouver they went to Honolulu, Valparaiso, and again to Bahia, and from all these places he wrote home. He refers gratefully to the kindness of Admiral Hornby and Captain Hopkins; the latter had a wonderful dog, Bumpus by name, and Rudolph—who was always very fond of animals—after recounting its clever performances says: “I hope that old Pluto (a black retriever) is very well still. I do not suppose he will have forgotten me in his old age. You cannot tell how sorry I was to hear about poor old Racket (another retriever), I liked her very much, and she was such an affectionate old beast.” He was certainly,—I remember both of them well at Garendon. Rudolph liked Bahia better on his second visit, the weather being fine. But a long letter he wrote from thence to his sister Alice is chiefly remarkable for his detailed description of a burial at sea of a man who had died on board, and for his comments on the suicide of a Japanese prisoner, which greatly shocked him, as did also the fact that “he was buried on shore, and a Christian (Protestant) burial given to him as if he had died a natural death!” Incidents of this kind, which impressed or jarred on his religious sense,

he never fails to notice. On November 15 they anchored in Plymouth Sound, and writing next day to his father to announce their return to England he mentions that three weeks before he had hurt his knee "in playing the game hycockolorum," and that Admiral Hornby had most kindly allowed him to lie on the sofa in his cabin, and dine with him until he could get about again. Writing to his sister a fortnight later he says:—"I went to church at the Cathedral on Sunday for Mass, and my friend R—— accompanied me. In the evening I went to service. They had Compline and Benediction, and Dr. Vaughan (the Bishop) preached a beautiful sermon on faith. I only wish R—— had been there to have heard him, it was the best sermon, I think, I have ever heard. I do not believe there was a dry eye in the Cathedral. It was a beautiful service, and I am very glad I went."

The Liverpool was paid off on December 2, 1870, and Rudolph, who had just passed his seventeenth birthday, had the happiness of spending the next few months at home. It was the last Christmas for some years he was to be with his family.

## CHAPTER V.

### FOUR YEARS ON THE 'CAMELEON.'

“ O far beyond the waters  
The fickle feet may roam,  
But they find no light so pure and bright  
As the one fair star of home ;  
The star of tender hearts, lady,  
That glows in an English home.”

*F. W. F.*

RUDOLPH'S next absence from home was to be a longer one. Meanwhile, with the exception of a short break at the end of January to pass an examination, he was at Garendon for nearly four months. At the beginning of April 1871, after a short visit to Ugbrooke, which he greatly enjoyed, he joined H.M.S. Himalaya at Plymouth, in which he was to go out to Panama, and there to change into the Camelcon. He naturally felt this second parting from the home where his affections were so firmly centred, “dreadfully dreary” at the moment. But he soon recovered his spirits, though his letters bear constant



RUDOLPH DE LISLE,

MIDSHIPMAN.



testimony to the abiding strength of his domestic interests and affections. His painting was always a great resource to him, and on this account chiefly he writes to his father a fortnight after sailing, "At last I am thankful to say that the six senior mids on board have been allowed into the saloon," from which they had previously been excluded by a new Admiralty regulation. He speaks also of intending to study history and Spanish, and in the last he became afterwards quite an adept. A Spanish Testament of his, bearing evident marks of use, is now in my hands. Nothing is more remarkable in his letters than his way of breaking off suddenly in the middle of what he calls "all this trash" about himself—viz. the detailed report of his doings and prospects—to make elaborate inquiries about all at home, especially when there was any trouble or illness; while on the other hand he is careful to minimise any inconvenience or injury to himself, as when he gets his knee hurt on the Himalaya, the great object being to assure his parents that there is no need for them to be uneasy about him.

There is one subject, dwelt upon in several of his letters about this time, which it is unpleasant to have to notice, but impossible altogether to ignore. The state of Catholic discipline and morality in some parts of South America has long since unhappily become matter of public scandal and a cause of grave

anxiety at Rome. There is no use in blinking facts which are only too notorious, and it may be well to observe the sort of impression produced by this novel experience on a devout young English Catholic brought up as Rudolph had been. His faith indeed was not shaken, or his deeply ingrained sense of right and wrong obscured, but he could not fail to be more or less injuriously affected for the time being by the shock of finding himself constrained to censure and despise where he had been wont only to reverence, and feeling practically repelled from the sacraments he was accustomed to frequent—and notably from Confession—by the evil example of those authorised to dispense them. In one letter, dated "Colon, Panama," he says:—"I went on shore to Mass to-day; a wretched church made of wood (the Protestant church is a very nice one of stone), but the priest was English, at least I should think so from the way he preached. We had a very small congregation, about fifty or sixty, and in his sermon, which was a very good one, he said he was sorry to see that not one-fiftieth part of the congregation would ever go to Mass. But I know what South America is pretty well, and so am not surprised." In the next letter, a month later, from Panama, occurs the following passage:—"I never saw such a vile church as there is at Taboga; the most detestable-looking figures, supposed to be statues of different

Saints, but made of miserable plaster and everything out of taste. We were there on Sunday, and I went to Mass, which was said, by the bye, in just twenty minutes; the priest hurried through it in the most disgraceful way I can possibly imagine; anyhow I was perfectly disgusted. I was very glad that the blue-jackets had not been allowed to go, as there is an order at the station prohibiting them from going ashore. But no wonder the priest carried on as he did considering his character. He jokingly told one of the officers that he was married, and, on his observing that he thought Catholic priests could not marry, replied that 'he was not married, but only had a wife.' What I told P. about religion in South America was simply told too sparingly altogether, but now that I have witnessed with my own eyes how things are carried out in these places, I do not mind telling you what I know to be the truth. And as far as I could hear it is the same all up the coast, and at Mazatlan it is still worse. No wonder these places are so immoral when the clergy themselves set such an example. When I was in the Barrosa I was told about this by a sub-lieutenant who had been out in the station for four years, and I simply thought he was bigoted and nothing else, and now find he did not in the least exaggerate. Inside the Cathedral here there are any amount of people buried in the aisles, and on some of the grave-stones, which

stand up as in a burial-ground, is written, 'So-and-so, legitimate son of So-and-so.' There are so many cases of the other kind, that, when they are legitimate, they put it on their grave-stones, so that there may be no mistake. And this is a Catholic country!" There is more and worse here and elsewhere, but this may suffice.

The *Mail*, *Field*, *Illustrated News*, and *Punch* were taken in on the Cameleon, but Rudolph asked to have the *Saturday Review* also sent to him, "as it is a first-rate paper to find out all that is going on;" he also asked for the *Spectator* (the book), which shows that he did not confine his reading to the newspapers. A new captain came on board at Callao, whom he liked, though he was "very strict on duty; but off he is very nice, and a thorough gentleman." From Callao he paid several visits to Lima, but was not on the whole greatly impressed with its appearance:—"I cannot say that it deserves the name of 'the city of kings,' the only really fine buildings being the churches, especially the Cathedral, which is a splendid building. . . . In the Cathedral, embalmed, are the remains of the great Pizarro, who conquered this country, but very little can be seen of him. The head is very nearly a skeleton, and the hands look dried up and withered; altogether a sort of creature one would not care to have a nightmare about. Nearly every one goes to see his remains, and they

cut off a piece of his cloak and give to one. I think the cloak must have been replenished a good many times since 1530. The population here are all sorts—Spanish, Incas (the ancient race), a few English, and Americans. The Peruvians are chiefly Spaniards mixed with the Indians, and there are now no true Incas. They are a miserable set of creatures.” In a letter, about the same time, to his father, we find one of the many indications of that undercurrent of habitual thoughtfulness which even in his lightest moments seems to have kept the idea of death—and perhaps of an early death—always more or less present to his mind. He is speaking of family matters, and breaks off to observe :—“ By the time you get this letter your autumn will almost have passed, and the leaves have fallen off ; by your letter to me Gardendou was just turning beautifully green, and now by the time I write it has already commenced to wither. Young as I am (he was not yet eighteen), I cannot help noticing that each succeeding year seems to pass with double speed. It seems to me that it was only the other day that I was out here in the Flying Squadron, and still it is considerably over a year.”

In a letter to his mother of January 2, 1872, from Valparaiso, he describes at length the “jovial” observance of Christmas Day on board, when in the course of the festivities a sedan chair covered with

a flag was extemporised, and five of the officers of his mess were carried round the lower deck by the blue-jackets, amid cheering and the sound of instruments of all kinds, from dish kettles, played with spoons; it comes out quite incidentally that he was himself one of the five. He had managed to enjoy himself, but his thoughts, as usual, reverted to the home circle:—"All that day I was trying to picture to myself Garendon, the whole place covered with snow, and the house decorated with holly, as it was last time; and this ship on Christmas Day sailing lazily along under a burning sun and a heavy sea, which of course caused it to roll a great deal, and saved more than one man, for how could they be supposed to walk straight when the ship was rolling?" Two months later, writing from Payta, he could tell of a day's shooting "with another mid," when they killed nineteen snipes and six plovers between them, seventeen falling to his own share. Their ordinary fare meanwhile was not luxurious. A long letter to his brother Edwin, of July 1st, begins with a humorous account of how he has "not touched anything save salt horse and a few other things, including weevilly biscuits, for the last two months, but these weevils do instead of meat. . . . I have been thinking that cockroach soup and roasted rats would be a vast improvement on what we are now feeding upon." A little further on he

relates the sudden death in convulsions, a month before, of "one of the finest men in the ship," and "trusts he was prepared, for from the time he was in danger to the time he expired he was never conscious." He was buried on shore, at Magellan, the funeral being attended by as many of the officers and crew as the boats would carry. "The whole population turned out to see the funeral, and they were much edified when they saw the way the Protestant part of the party behaved. It made a great impression on them (the Protestants), most of them never having seen a funeral in our Church before." Rudolph himself, however, was by no means edified with the conduct of the religious ceremony; he complains of the prayers being scrambled over in church, and that "in a Catholic country no priest came with the procession, though the man was one, and the body was quietly lowered into the grave without a prayer being read, saving those in the church." He adds that he saw several messmates of the dead man burst into tears as the grave was being covered up: "I think that was the first time I have ever seen a blue-jacket really showing outwardly what he felt."

All this time, as indeed during the greater part of the four years he was on the Cameleon, they were cruising about on the Mexican or South American coast, and they were frequently during the earlier



part of the time at Callao, the port of Lima. Writing from Panama, on August 4, 1872, he gives the following account of "another revolution at Callao and Lima," which is pleasantly illustrative of the normal political atmosphere in those parts:—"The Secretary of War at Lima, having got all the soldiers on his side, suddenly threw the Governor, or—I should say—President, into prison, and then set up for himself and proclaimed martial law, as will be imagined. The people would not stand this, and the forts were stormed by them, and the Secretary (I forget his name) slaughtered. Three brothers, Guitanis by name, three of the greatest scoundrels (then) alive, set up for themselves, and the eldest, a Colonel Toho, commanding the forces of Lima, was shot dead as he arrived at the station. His next brother then took charge, and determined on revenge; he found entrance to the President's prison, and stabbed and mutilated him horribly, he himself escaping, but just as he was getting into the train, he was dragged out and stabbed by all those around. The last brother, seeing all chance of success hopeless, attempted to hide till everything was quiet; he hid in a large apothecary's shop, and there he was found by the populace, who despatched him with their daggers, and the bodies of the three were by public order hanged in the principal piazza and then buried.

Pérez is the new President, and he is a



the Guitanis by getting on board one of the men-of-war. Everything is now quiet again, but several people who have nothing to do with the politics of the country were shot, some think to pay off old scores. It is often said in these countries that during the revolutions more debts are paid off than at any other time, though in rather a sanguinary way." Lima must be an agreeable place to live in! But in this matter of frequent and sanguinary revolutions there is probably little to choose between the different Spanish republics of South America, as Sir H. Maine points out in his recent work on *Popular Government*.

Rudolph's next Christmas was spent at Esquimalt, in Vancouver Island, and in a long letter to his mother, dated "Honolulu, Feb. 9th, 1873,"—the opportunities of sending letters were fewer while they were away from the mainland—he takes occasion, in describing a deer-hunt on the island, to speak of the scenery. They had had frost and a heavy snowfall, so that "the drifts were occasionally up to our middles." He proceeds:—"The walking at the best of times is very bad, sharp-pointed rocks (warranted to wear out a pair of boots in a couple of days), and these covered with an immense variety of creepers which trip one up every minute, and the whole thickly wooded with pines and firs. The scenery is most beautiful, especially from the summit

of Green Mountain, from which on a clear day one can see Mount Baker, with its snow-clad peak towering above the ranges of mountains in British Columbia. Far below one is a deep ravine, this part of the mountain being quite precipitous, and between the foot and the Straits of Juan de Fuca, some forty miles off, are to be seen the valleys—of which one first catches a glimpse through the glades of firs—and the most lovely streams which flow into them from the mountains, dashing over precipices and forming beautiful cascades, while here and there are small islands thickly studded with firs and isolated from the forests by the boiling surf which surrounds them. The timber rises majestically from the promontories, with here and there a tree which has fallen a victim either to the woodman's axe, decay, or the force of the wind." The scenery about Honolulu again was very fine :—"The bold and rough outline of the mountains, with the sun shining upon them, gives an immense depth of shadow to the ravines, which is strongly contrasted by the snow-white trunks of the trees, which are scattered like small forests, so compact are they together, rising here to the summit of one of the highest peaks, and there to the very basis of the perpendicular heights; but what contrasts more vividly still are the heavy rolling clouds in the background which cover and anon envelope the summits, and then the sun suddenly breaks forth, and the

drizzling rain above is completely eclipsed by the most perfect double rainbows which stretch from one range to another, while below in the valley all is sunshine. A different picture comes over the scene in barely a moment, and the winds burst forth with violent gusts bringing torrents of rain, as though the heavens themselves were open. This is chiefly caused by the numberless small swamps of poa [a kind of corn], which forms the chief food of the natives, being scattered over the mountains. These islands are of volcanic origin, and the rocks, or what appear at first sight to be such, prove on closer observation really to be the overflow of lava ; numberless small craters are to be found on the island, but are all extinct. Upon some of the hills, over 500 feet high, are small pools, in which the ducks in the daytime take refuge ; and the strangest fact is that there are fish in them."

He goes on to speak of the inhabitants :—" These islanders have made gigantic strides towards civilisation of late years ; eighty years ago they were cannibals, and lived in a state of nudity ; now they are very friendly, hundreds of them Christians, and dress something like Spaniards. The men are a fine race, but the women most ungainly, and wear a huge loose robe, something like Moorish women, but without their ease and grace. I always heard they were very pretty, but I think they are the reverse. Of course there are exceptions : Queen Emma in her early days

was beautiful, and has still a fine figure and a noble cast of features. King Kamihamika died about five weeks ago, and the prince, by name Prince Billy, of rather disreputable character, reigns in his stead. Since his coronation he has turned over a new leaf, and is a teetotaller, and has passed a law that on Sundays no liquors, wines, &c., are to be sold, under a heavy penalty. There is a very nice Catholic church here and a number of Carmelite nuns. We have been there for Mass on two Sundays, and had a very nice service indeed ; the sermon was in Kamika, and so we did not benefit much by it. There is a very large congregation, both natives and whites. The church is large and roomy, very plain but very effective, and handsome altars." He adds:—"I was told a strange fact about the population of this place yesterday. In 1700, when Kamihamika, a chief of Owyhee, conquered these islands, he had an army of over 100,000 men, and now the entire population of the islands is under 65,000—men, women, and children included. Competent judges say that in a century or so the race will be almost extinct." <sup>1</sup>

In his next letter, dated from "Apia, Samoa Islands," at the end of May, he mentions how they had been down among the South Sea Islands of the Pacific, and goes on to give a description of them, a

<sup>1</sup> Cook reckoned the inhabitants of the whole group of Sandwich Islands at 400,000 a century ago.

good, part of which shall be quoted here. But the upshot of it all is that it recalls his thoughts more vividly than ever to Garendon. His final comment is very characteristic:—"How delicious must the woods and flowers be now looking, and superb the rhododendrons! I often suppose myself back again and enjoying the beauty of the scenery; of the quiet delightful English scenery I do not think one ever gets one's fill, but with this scenery out here in the tropics after a time all the novelty wears off and leaves nothing but ennui. I am glad I have seen the islands, but am still more so that they are done, and that the next start we shall have an opportunity of both receiving and sending letters." But though his inner gaze was ever riveted on "the one fair star of home," that did not interfere with a keen and interested observation of whatever came within their purview, and on beautiful scenery he always looked with the eye not only of an observer but an artist; from childhood he had loved and lived in the contemplation of it. And now a long passage from this Samoa letter to his mother shall be given as it stands:—

"Before I enter into any details I will mention the islands we have visited, and so you will be able to see where they are situated if you look at a chart or a map, and will then be able to follow me as I attempt to give some short and vague description of each. I had heard it said of these islands before I visited them,

that it would puzzle the pen of an author and the brush of an artist to depict each island in a correct and satisfactory manner, and the more so do I find it, from not having kept the journal I had intended. But, be that as it may, I can recall each individual place to my mind, each object that excited my curiosity and each scene to my eye, as though the same was before me now. Then to the point at once : Nukahiva in Marquesas Islands ; then Papiete Harbour, Tahiti ; in Society Islands, Huahini, Raiatea, Bora Bora ; then Mangaia, Rarotonga, and Aitutaki in the Cook Islands ; Inuë or Savage Island ; then to Pango-Pango in Tutuila ; then here, Apia, Upolu, Samoa ; then, I am glad to say, only one more before Valparaiso—Pitcairn's Island. Before commencing, I hardly know what or how much I told you of Honolulu, but, as far as I recollect, my letter was written just before we left for Nukahiva, and so I will not make a repetition of the same. We left Honolulu on February 16th, and arrived at Nukahiva on March 14th, having made a very quick passage, considering the foul winds we had. The town, or village, is a picturesque little place, situated close to the water's edge, and surrounded with huge groves of orange and lime trees, which impart to the place the most delicious scent ; tall, gaunt-looking cocoa-nut-trees abound, and tower above the lower parts of the village. The hills are covered with guava-trees, which,

at the time we were there, abounded with fruit. The mountains which surround the bay and form the harbour (which is narrow at the entrance, though roomy within) have a bold and rugged outline, here and there covered with the greenest foliage, and at other places, in by far the most numerous patches, bare ground of a deep red colour, without so much as a shrub to cover it. This forms all the greater contrast with the upper range, which is all composed of blue rocks, the rough line of which is occasionally broken by a thicket of iron-wood trees, which seem to thrive the best upon the highest summits. Numerous clefts are to be seen in the mountains, where, during certain times of the year (during the rainy season), the water rushes down, and must add greatly to the picturesqueness of the place; but at the time we visited the island my impression was that the place was completely parched by the heat of the sun.

“ During the rainy season the place is beautiful, and is entirely clothed with tropical vegetation. Wild goats abound, and are to be seen at all times near the summits in large flocks. The natives are of a dark, dusky hue, tattooed from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet with different designs, the chief design apparently being various kinds of squares,—the lips tattooed with blue spots and lines from the corners nearly extending to the ears. Ear-rings are worn by both sexes, in the form of crescents, and the



same upon the breasts, suspended by a necklace of berries or beads. The men especially were well built, but somehow did not seem to look healthy ; but that can be accounted for by the indolent lives they lead, never taking exercise, and hardly working harder than climbing a cocoa-nut tree for the sake of food. The place abounds with cotton-plants, which grow and die and decay, just where they stand, the natives being too lazy to pick them. Great quantities of the silk-cotton are likewise to be found, and are planted and looked out for by a few Chinese who have emigrated there. The houses are built with bamboos and thatched with cocoa-nut leaves, and are erected upon a well-built foundation of large boulders of lava. Within they are extremely clean ; the floor, running lengthways, is divided with a line of stones from one end to the other ; upon one half, furthest from the entrance, are laid down bundles of cocoa-nut leaves about four inches deep, and upon these are carefully laid the native mats upon which the people sleep. Upon the other half, which is paved with large flat stones from the brooks, are laid perhaps two or three heaps of cocoa-nuts, branches of tara-root (their principal food), a huge flat piece of lava (upon which they prepare their tara by pounding it with another piece), a few large gourds filled with water, —abundance of bananas and oranges, and lastly a drum—the last hardly like a European one. Their



drums are made with hollowed-out cocoa-nut trees, a piece five feet long (nearest the ground), two or three joints from the ground, then spliced bamboo in strips all round and firmly attached with thongs, the upper and lower extremities being left open. Then large pieces of hide laced with the same, tight down over the ends, to rings of the same material, a foot from either end, the band part being cut into all kinds of fantastic designs and shapes. The drum when struck makes a most curious and dull sound, as may be expected. Male and female—in fact, all the family (if we may term it so)—sleep in the same hut, without any partitions whatever. The Marquesas belong to the French, who have not the least idea of colonising the place, and in consequence the people (natives) have seen the vices of the whites without having profited by the good. A few years ago the French had a force of soldiers here, but they have been sent to Tahiti. The fort still remains, but with only one gun, but there is a French Governor, a few gendarmes who are great tyrants, and who cannot see a native dance or sing without imagining they are anticipating a rising, and who consequently walk the unfortunate ones off to Calaboos upon the slightest provocation. The mass of the people are supposed to be Catholic, and two priests and three or four Sisters of Mercy are the missionaries belonging to the place, but even they do little or no good, for there is *none* in them.

They are not only the most immoral islanders, but the most cowardly race. Every now and then they declare war against one of the smaller islands, and when the latter arrive in their canoes they each take up positions, taking good care to be out of shot of one another, and completely under protection. Then they sally forth, and sometimes, after a *hard* day's fighting, have perhaps one or two wounded. During the last war, a few months ago, which lasted for some time, one warrior was killed on one side, and three, I think the number was, upon the other. The natives, whenever a schooner (if one happens to call) comes in, immediately hasten on board, and give all sorts of curios for liquors, spirits, &c., and immediately hasten away to the nearest grove, and there debauch until they are insensible. The missionaries say the race is dying off very fast; in fact, very few children are to be seen at all. The deaths number seven, to every one or two births, and it is computed that in twenty years or so hardly a native will be alive upon the island. I do not think myself that it is a healthy place. Numbers of our men complained that it was most relaxing, and I found it so myself. I think this must be partly owing to the formation of the harbour, which is one vast amphitheatre, only open to the southward, and east is the prevailing wind.

"The chiefs are chosen in a most strange manner. If a native can build a whaler (boat) or get one, he

is at once made a chief. The goat-shooting is not worth the trouble, for the Governor is most particular about fire-arms, and as one had (or rather he wished one) to go upon one's bended knees for permission, or very nearly so, I did not care to do so. . . . The Sisters of Mercy have schools, but they say they are only good whilst they are there, and the only chance is when the natives are sick or dying, and then they alter, and so the teaching does not always fall eventually upon barren ground. As it is, I have made too lengthy a comment upon the Marquesas, and I will proceed further. We remained a fortnight, during which time I passed for acting sub-lieutenant, but it is only preliminary until I get to Valparaiso, and I receive the pay, 90*l.* instead of 32*l.* We sailed with a fair fresh breeze, and arrived in four days, on April 1st, at Tahiti. Well has that island been termed the most lovely of the South Sea Islands, and I think anything more beautiful could not be conceived, in outline, and in the surpassing freshness of its foliage; the magnificent range of mountains towering over the town, though far in the distance, its beautiful cascades, undulating hills of various tints, closing right up to the town (which is hidden amongst the dark foliage of the noble trees of the tropics), all go far beyond any thought of a rival in its luxuriance and its beauty. Its natives seem to belong to the place, for they are

indeed a splendid race, handsome in feature, lithe and agile as panthers, and most dignified in their bearing. Their colour is a fine bronze, and they look healthy in the extreme. The men in many cases stand six feet four in height, and are quite Herculean in build. The average must be over five feet ten if anything ; I may be over the mark, but I do not think it. The women walk as stately as empresses, but I cannot say I could describe them in the glowing manner Lord Pembroke did in his *South Sea Bubbles*. I think in many cases he must have been picturing ideals to himself, without seeing the stern reality. They are nice-looking in some cases, and have beautiful long black raven hair, good eyes, lashes, and brows, but those are the only good features, the lower ones are decidedly coarse. Having often heard of the lovely Queen Pomari, as I was anxious to do so, we all went in full dress to be presented, and sadly was I disappointed ; for, though only fifty (about that age), she had not a good feature left, and had nothing whatever to say ; and soon after the business was over, I met her, walking to her palace, without shoes or stockings, she having put off her royalty in the same way we throw off an old coat, when suitable. The town is well built, with broad roomy streets, and most excellent roads, which extend for several miles beyond the town. The Governor has a first-rate

house, delightful gardens, &c., and his billet as Governor is considered a most enviable position by the French Diplomatic Corps; every law which is altered, and everything that is done, is sanctioned by Queen Pomari, but her position is only nominal, and to appease the feelings of the natives. The Governor has perfect sway over the place, but the French are hated by the natives, who like the English as much as they dislike the others. The fact is, the former have no idea of governing these islands, or of bringing out the natural productions of the land; sugar, coffee, and cotton plantations are pretty numerous, but sufficient labour is not to be had; in fact, the most flourishing ones are either worked or owned by Englishmen. These latter know how to manage those men, and consequently get more than double the amount of work out of them than the French do. Guavas abound, and are preserved and made into jelly and sent to Europe. Tahiti, if it belonged to England, would be one of our best and richest colonies; but, as it is, heavy penalties are imposed upon any one taking guavas or fruits and cotton which he might pick up and make something of; whilst, on the other hand, they allow the same to decay upon the ground. Until quite lately, Englishmen had every obstacle put in the way of farming; but now, through bad management, the difficulty is labour; this last has

caused great comment in England. The facts of the case are these. Natives being wanted for labour, and those of Tahiti not feeling inclined to work, men must be had, and schooners with seven or eight men were sent to some of the most savage islands for them. The captains of the schooners, when they get there, give a native feast, and when it is over, the captain tells them he wants men to go with him to such and such an island, telling them how they will be treated, how many dollars a month they will receive, and how long they will be bound to serve their masters when they get there. The natives at once jump at the offer, and flock on board ; and in some cases, a schooner with a crew of eight men, has brought from a hundred to a hundred and eighty in a single voyage, several hundred miles : this of itself must contradict the statement that they are maltreated in the way it has been represented. I have seen myself several cases of natives brought to the islands, working upon the plantations, looking well and seeming perfectly happy. They are fed by the owners, and have their huts, wives, and families, and so I cannot see myself what reason people in England have to interfere, but of course it has been misrepresented ; but certainly in some cases the natives have been maltreated, and treated with the greatest cruelty—the men being lassoed and dragged on board and bound, and thereby *forced*

away from their homes, but by far the greatest proportion come willingly and are treated well. Of course savages do not require the same minute care that a white does. Of course it is only right that men-of-war should be sent round to see that nothing akin to slavery is carried out; but besides that, they are useless for any purpose. At most of the islands there are whites upon them besides the missionaries, and the sight of an English man-of-war is quite sufficient to keep them on good behaviour for a long time towards the whites.

“ But I am wandering away from the island of which I was speaking. Living high up in the mountains of Tahiti is a race of wild men in the true sense of the word, short in stature, well built, hairy and shaggy like wild beasts, living in holes or amongst crags at the summits, and having been seen but twice during the last seven years. About that length of time ago, a party of French officers were out upon a shooting excursion, and arriving at one of the upper peaks, they saw what they supposed to be some wild animals, running about upon all fours. Upon further examination, by remaining quiet, in a pool at the foot of one of the perpendicular cliffs, some women were seen by them bathing in the pool, with their hair trailing upon the ground. They had hardly gazed upon them for a moment, when the men, who were crawling upon all fours, suddenly

lifted their heads and commenced sniffing the air like wild beasts. In a moment they had detected the presence of strangers, and had sprung up the side of the cliffs, and disappeared into holes in the rocks. Nothing more could be seen of them at that time, although the party remained in the proximity for several days. About six months ago, a male was captured by some of the natives, and brought to Papiete Harbour. He appeared to be in a dreadful fright, and made no other noise than moaning most piteously. He was secured in a hut under a guard, and was always attempting to escape, scratching up the ground with his hands and nails, and trying to burrow out of the place. Missionaries, the priests, tried to get some ideas into him, but he seemed not to understand any language, not even the Tahitian, and in a very short time had contrived to make his escape, and has not been since heard of. Wild hogs are to be had in pretty numerous quantities, but are very wild, and have to be hunted with dogs, but are too far distant for anything under a week's leave. Large pigeons and numerous ducks are to be shot during certain seasons of the year but not whilst we were there. Doves abound of a rich grey colour with pink heads, but are hard to be detected by an eye not accustomed to the vegetation. I shot several of the latter. Every kind of fern abounds in the glens ;



crayfish, eels, and a species of trout in the brooks, which rush down the sides of the mountains over huge masses of rock, and make a course for themselves in the ravines, sweeping everything before them which forms an impediment in their course, and empty themselves into the sea. Walking up one of the glens, especially up to one of the mountain passes, the scenery was grand in the extreme, cliffs from one to two thousand feet rising up perpendicularly from their base, the ridges covered with trees; half way down here and there a bunch of trees standing out prominently upon a buttress of rock and looking as though suspended in mid-air, in the centre of the pass, the water rushing down with the velocity of a whirlpool some hundreds of feet (400 to 600), and the whole foot of the pass as it were covered with spray and foam; innumerable rainbows and varied colours showing right across the abyss in all kinds of fantastic forms and shapes. When I first beheld the pass and the grand scenery I was fairly entranced by it, and remained gazing at the beauty of the scene, until the setting sun informed me by its darkening rays that, if I wished to return that night, I had better start at once, and loath as I was to do so I had to comply, and a pretty rough walk I had back. In the tropics, as of course you know, there is

few minutes it is comparatively dark. The beaten track kept crossing and recrossing the mountain torrent, and in some cases, having my gun in one hand, it was pretty hard work. The only thing I regretted so much was not having a sketch-book with me to give some idea of the beauty of the place. However, I have a large water-colour sketch of Tahiti, with the principal cascade in the background, and I flatter myself it gives no mean idea of the place."

Rudolph passed the provisional examination in seamanship for the rank of sub-lieutenant in March 1873, with a first-class certificate—after which he was allowed to wear the uniform—and the final one in the following December, but he had to go through a course of study at the Royal Naval College at Greenwich after his return to England in 1875, when he finally passed as sub-lieutenant on September 10th, and in the following April (1876) took a second-class certificate as lieutenant. He writes to his father from Valparaiso in August 1873:—"I am provisionally acting (*i.e.* as sub-lieutenant), and wear the uniform. I have no fear of not passing, otherwise I should wear midshipman's uniform still, but I find that I have more weight with those below me in the ship than without it, for in the one they recognise a commissioned officer, in the other a subordinate one."

In the following December they were again at Esquimalt, in Vancouver Island, and he gives a curious description of the consecration of the new Anglican Cathedral at Victoria, to which all the officers in the ship were invited. The building, he says, is a fine Gothic one, though with an ugly tower and poor attempt at a spire, situated on a prominent hill overhanging the town. But the point of interest lay in the Dean's sermon—which was “very appropriate for the occasion,”—and the scene which followed:—“He expressed his utmost joy at seeing the change the Church of England was making every day; he rejoiced to witness the return of the Church to her real doctrines, maintained the necessity of outward show, or in other words choirs and Church music, to impress the congregation, and finally maintained the truth of the Real Presence. He had hardly uttered the last words before he was interrupted violently by the Archdeacon, who poured forth such volleys of abuse that the ladies most of them left the church; the matter was referred to the Bishop, and the sermon abruptly terminated. After the service was over the Dean, Archdeacon, &c., had it out in the sacristy before the Bishop,” who took the Dean's side, and sharply rebuked the Archdeacon. Rudolph's comment on the sermon is:—“Anything more Catholic could hardly be imagined out of the pale of the Church. If this is the commencement, I wonder

what will be the ending?" In another letter about this time, after referring to the *Culturkampf* in Germany, he says:—"I really think that England is the only country that is advancing in a religious point of view. . . . Out here everybody is perfectly indifferent to religion, and it is much the same all over South America. Any one who had not been well brought up and had everything explained would be liable to be shaken severely by what he sees every day."

In March 1874 he writes from Panama to congratulate his sister, Mrs. Strutt, on the birth of her son:—"I like the names of your child (Edward Lisle), and hope he will grow up a devoted son to both of you and an additional tie of affection between you; under your influence I fancy it would be hard for any child brought up by you to be otherwise. Though I have said all this, I must say I hate squalling babies, but *of course* yours is different to others, or at least so you will say! When they begin to speak I also begin to like them, but before, *non.*" At all events, this "squalling baby"—now a boy of twelve preparing for Eton—became a great favourite of his in after days. The same letter bears evidence of the *Heimweh*, which after his long absence was coming upon him. He hoped to go the next day across to Colon to see three friends off in the Nile, which was returning to England, "and

another reason is to have a look at the Atlantic, which I have not seen for about three years. Tomorrow is the anniversary of our leaving England, and I have a kind of longing to have a look in the right direction, . . . at the ocean which encompasses the most delightful land on earth." During Lent and Eastertide they had been lying off Tobago Island, and he tells his mother that "one or two Sundays none of us went to church, and we had prayers on board, so disgusted were we with the clergy of the place. I know it is wrong, and you will say that it does not matter who officiates, but when one knows that a Holy Sacrifice is being made a sacrilege, however bad one may be one's self, one cannot help being utterly disgusted with others." For the same reason he felt unable to go to his Easter duties there, which can hardly be wondered at. He had hoped to find some confessor from England or elsewhere, but in this he was disappointed.

In May 1874 the Admiral, much to his surprise, offered and pressed upon him in very flattering terms, the appointment of acting-lieutenant on the Scout, at the same time expressing his regret at not having "a death vacancy" to offer him, in which case he would have not merely received the position and pay of a lieutenant for the time being, but the actual lieutenancy, and would thus have passed over the heads of some 300 officers senior to himself.

As it was, the Admiral pointed out to him the advantage of being able to say that as an acting sub-lieutenant he had been picked out at so early an age for this post before many of higher standing; he was only twenty at the time. He felt very grateful for the kindness shown him, but for various reasons decided to decline it, partly from the belief—which proved to be erroneous—that it would have delayed his return to England, and the opportunity of completing his examinations. He thought and said afterwards that, while acting for the best at the moment, he had made a mistake in not accepting the offer. In December, however, the Admiral made him acting-lieutenant on the *Cameleon* in place of the late senior lieutenant, who retired. In the following May they returned home, “sighting dear old England on the 24th, the Queen’s birthday, and we got into Plymouth under sail, making a very smart evolution of it, shortening and furling sails in Plymouth Sound. . . . Never have I seen the coast of Cornwall looking more charming, so refreshingly green after the sun-parched countries of Western South America. Plymouth was looking perfectly lovely, and grieved I was when we left it for Sheerness.” He adds a remark which Devonshire men will appreciate:—“Devonshire cream, that most delicious of eatables (?), I swallowed in such quantities that I expressed an opinion I did not

care for it: this was after, to use a naval phrase, I was 'properly stowed.'"

One sad, though hardly unexpected, piece of news awaited him on his return, the death of his uncle, the Rev. Charles Phillipps, rector of Sheepshed. His comment is eminently characteristic, as well for its tenderness as for its revelation of that subtle sense of second-sight peculiar to sympathetic natures:—"I was so very sorry to hear of it," he writes to his father, "but, strange as it may seem to you, I knew I should never meet him again in this world. The last day I was at home [four years before] I was riding over to Gracedieu, and passing through Sheepshed I met him. I stopped and spoke to him for a few minutes, and his manner and words were so impressive, together with the way he wished me good-bye, so kindly and affectionately, that something at the time and since told me we should never again meet. No wonder he was beloved by all with whom he came in contact, for it could hardly be otherwise. Give my affectionate love to Aunt Elizabeth, and tell her how deeply I feel for her loss." He goes on in the same letter to assert his disagreement with many English travellers, in thinking that the rural inhabitants of other countries are, as a rule, in many respects superior to our own, in manners, in courtesy, and in ~~hospitality~~. When out shooting, both in Mexico and elsewhere,



he had always found them most hospitable, ready to offer any refreshment in their houses without expecting or caring to accept any recompense, while "the South Sea Islanders are hospitality itself, and among the Hawaiian, Society, and Navigator Groups they cannot do too much for an Englishman," and "if ever there was a Garden of Eden, it must have been Tahiti, or a place exactly like it." Without any disparagement to the value of his testimony it may perhaps be surmised that the different experience of other travellers is partly due to a difference in their own bearing. Courtesy begets courtesy, and his must have been a very churlish nature who turned against Rudolph de Lisle. He does not speak hopefully, however, of the progress of Christian missions, and says he has heard the Bishop of Tahiti complain that religion is losing ground among the islands.

After a short time spent with his family at Garendon, and in visiting near relations and friends, he went in July to the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, where he remained till the following April, when he had passed all his examinations and obtained his certificate as lieutenant. He came home for Easter, the first he had passed there since 1868, and the last before his father's death. And — thus the first half of his naval career was brought to an honourable close.



## CHAPTER VI.

### CRUISING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND PACIFIC.

“ The Boy was sprung to manhood ; in the wilds  
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,  
And his soul drank their sunbeams : he was girt  
With strange and dusky aspects . . .  
. . . . . on the sea  
And on the shore he was a wanderer ;  
There was a mass of many images  
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was  
A part of all.”

*Byron.*

IN the last week of May 1876, just as “the lovely rhododendrons” were bursting into bloom, Rudolph left Garendon to join H.M.S. Sultan at Spithead, commanded by the Duke of Edinburgh, and go out in it to Malta to meet H.M.S. Pallas, to which he had been appointed. He speaks in warm terms of the courtesy and amiability of the Prince, who “makes himself most agreeable whether on duty or off,” and moreover “is a most first-rate musician, and plays the violin remarkably well ; every evening nearly he

goes down into the ward-room and plays." There were several musicians also among the officers, and it "made him feel quite small not being able to play any instrument." His comrades, however, were not slow in discovering his vocal powers—of which he thought little himself—and wished he had been staying on the ship longer, for that as well as other reasons. He was naturally much interested in "the Eastern Question," which was then rising to the surface, and—as might be expected from his father's son—was strongly anti-Turkish in his sympathies, though he had not much confidence in Greeks or Russians. He sincerely hopes "we shall be on the side of the expellers of the Turks," and "cannot see why England should not be content to take Egypt, and let the Turks be driven out of the country"—an opinion not peculiar to himself, either then or since.

While at Malta, he had an opportunity of visiting the famous Church of St. John—familiar enough to him in after years—which he greatly admired, specially noting the white marble representation of our Lord's Baptism behind the high altar, where "the expression of the faces is quite idealistic, and, though the whole place is magnificently decorated, still there is an absence of that painfully gorgeous colouring so often, if not always, seen in southern churches," which offended his more refined taste. At Malta he joined the *Pallas*, and his first impression

was favourable. The captain was "a gentleman, which is saying a good deal," and the first lieutenant, who had been with him on the *Liverpool*, he greatly liked in every way, while he got on very well with the other officers of the ship. His frank geniality and unselfishness always indeed secured him friends wherever he went. A letter to his mother from Beshika Bay, on July 17, gives a long and graphic report of a week's visit he had paid to Constantinople in company with a brother officer, illustrating at every turn his lively interest in the historical and religious associations of the place, as well as his keen eye for whatever was best worth observing in natural scenery or in art. I must content myself here with extracting a few salient points in the narrative. \*

They had passed the Dardanelles—where he notes the scene of Byron's famous exploit—on the previous evening. "The next morning at 11 a.m. we arrived, and had a capital view of the place in spite of squalls and rain, and anything more beautiful than Seraglio Point and the Golden Horn, with its numerous mosques and minarets, the various colours of the houses, the palaces and the two towns—Seraskier and Galata—one on each side of the water, I never saw. It looked quite like a Paradise, but this dream is soon dispelled, when once one has landed and seen the miserable streets, so narrow that there is hardly breathing-room, and 'shockingly paved with huge

boulders and rocks. These streets were alive with Turcos, Albanians, Greeks, &c., who certainly, though very picturesque as far as their dress is concerned, are very badly built ; the Albanians however are an exception, and nearly every man is over six feet." By and by, after describing the gloomy cemeteries, the Sultan's palace, and the lovely scenery of the Bosphorus, he comes to the world-famed Mosque of St. Sophia :—"It is a magnificent building, but everywhere the Cross has given way to the Crescent, the former being almost everywhere completely obliterated, but—strange to say—over the doorway a small cross and a dove remain, and the Turks dare not remove it. I made our guide ask the question, and the dervish would not answer it ; in the gallery above, all the crosses in hand-reach have been destroyed, but there are two on each of about twelve pillars above that height, but though they do not like them they do not care to destroy them, and I hear these are kept to show that the Crescent has triumphed over the Cross. It may be otherwise yet. I also had the pillar pointed out to me where the priest is supposed to have entered when the city was taken, and there is a brass plate upon it." He thought the mosque of Sultan Ahmed, however, finer than St. Sophia, and the stained glass of the windows magnificent, though of course, like the carpets, of no particular pattern. "We found numbers of people in

all the mosques, and infinitely more devout than Spaniards and Italians at church." Later on he remarks on the curious resemblance to some external details of Catholic worship—as in the use of incense, lights, &c.—but there the resemblance ends:—"Their idea of the future, and what their Paradise will be, and *what they have to do to be saved*, is as thoroughly anti-Christian as anything could possibly be. I disliked the Turks before I went near Constantinople, but now I have seen what they are, and what they have done to desecrate everything relative to their predecessors, I detest them still more; but from all I can hear there is mighty little difference between the Greek Church and themselves in anything except theory. . . . The day I left, posted up in several places was the following—'Money received here for the continuance of the holy war against the infidel'; and these are the people we are sticking up for, and who think us, though their friends, not fit to tie their shoe-laces!"

He returns to the subject in other letters about this time, saying that the Bulgarian atrocities make his blood boil, and wishing we could come to some arrangement with Russia. The Greeks, indeed, had quite lost "that grand spirit of their ancestors," and seemed to acquiesce abjectly in their servile lot, but "there is no doubt that this want of chivalrous courage is caused by their having been kept under heel

for 400 years and never allowed any sort of freedom or arms. Yet, strange as it may seem, they make sure they are going to regain Constantinople, and that apparently without any effort on their own part!" Of their religion he did not think highly:—"How Protestants can talk of union with the Greeks, and not with us, I cannot tell, and the more so when I see that, if some parts of Catholic Christendom are corrupt, they, in spite of all which is said in their favour, are infinitely more so on the whole; and that even in the Greek Church itself some differences, slight though they be, in points of faith still cause the bitterest feeling among themselves. The Church of Constantinople is detested by the Asiatic Greeks, though for mere hair-splitting." He returns to this subject more than once. In one letter he says:—"Their religion is really a kind of fetichism, and what is called by Protestants Mariolatry in our Church, would have to be called *idolatry* pure and simple in theirs. As far as I can make out, it seems a religion of the dead." He was amused at hearing how the Protestant chaplain on board had spoken in one sermon of "St. Polycarp and Cranmer" as "the two glorious saints who died for the faith"—thinking the former might perhaps have repudiated the connection—while in another discourse the same preacher declared that "the Turks worshipped a false God." This Rudolph characterizes as a monstrous calumny, "for, to give

them their due, they converted the Arab races to believing in God." He goes on to speculate on why Christianity should have spread so little in those parts as compared with Islam, and his natural insight brought him to much the same conclusion more elaborately argued out by F. Schlegel, that "on looking into the two doctrines one can understand that the human religion seemed more easy to follow than the Divine, and no man seems to have understood human nature better than Mahomet, or worked more skilfully upon it." He wished to see the Turk cleared out of Europe and an English occupation of Constantinople, for the time at all events; in any case, "if Russia attempts to gain it, she will find that we can prevent her, and that alone without any one's assistance." In subsequent letters he avows his conviction that "the Russians upon our Indian frontier are attempting to carry out their double-faced intrigues, and feeling their way towards our Indian Empire, in the same manner as I feel compelled to admit that I think they did in Servia;" but he doubts if the Indian natives would be disposed to trust themselves to their tender mercies, and insists that "the Mahometan population of Central Asia and India abominate them, and, if later on they are compelled to withdraw their troops from Turkestan for other purposes, it would be the signal for a general uprising of the Khanates upon their departing steps." Of the Servians he speaks with not unmerited



contempt, as very poor creatures "not worth their salt," who can reasonably expect no more than the *status quo*; but "the Montenegrins are indeed a splendid race, who deserve the sympathy of Europe for their gallant struggle, and all that they may get." As for "the integrity of the Ottoman Empire,"—Lord Beaconsfield's favourite formula at that time—he remarks that "the Turks may and will be ready to give any number of paper reforms as they always have done, and will be just as ready not to carry out a single one when the time comes, unless they are put into working order by one of the Powers, and what Power could do it better than ourselves, considering the experience we have had in India with Moslem populations and mixed religions?" He thought "Germany was playing a deep game," and was much afraid we might sooner or later witness the formation of a Slavonic Empire, and that Austria would be swallowed up in it.

And now it is time to turn from the political and military disquisitions which give a new interest to his letters of this date, but deal partly of course with detailed questions of the day, which have lost their immediate significance. In a letter of August 6th he tells his father how they had been for three days at Thaso Island, a most enchanting place, where he would have liked to stay longer, and which reminded him very much of the South Sea Islands, though



devoid of their luxuriant vegetation. Here he determined to scale the loftiest peak in a range of mountains, "the upper part 1,200 or 1,400 feet of nearly perpendicular, and in some places overhanging, rock." Ten altogether started, in different parties, but he alone reached the summit, although he and his companion, Anson, found after mounting to a considerable height that they had made a false start, and had to retrace their steps to the bottom, "jumping from stone to stone and hanging on to the boughs of the pines," and then begin their ascent over again. However, "I breakfasted on the top at 11.40 a.m., with my companion 500 feet below me and completely done up. Not one of the other party got beyond the first range." They found an easier way to descend. In a future letter we shall come to his account of a more notable mountaineering exploit in South America. But he found his chief amusement while they remained in Beshika Bay in his favourite sport of shooting, and in this he had become a thorough adept. He shot from seven to twelve couple of snipe a day, with a duck or so, and sometimes hares and woodcocks also. His fame as a shot reached the Admiral commanding-in-chief, who asked him to make out a list of the total amount killed, and he says that the marsh being so completely his quarters he got the sobriquet among the fellows in the fleet of "the demon of the marsh," and they generally inquired

in what part of it he was shooting, and went to another. During the four months they were there he killed nearly 1,000 head, 721 being snipe. He also took the opportunity of sketching, and the Admiral, whose kindness he gratefully acknowledges, invited him to luncheon to meet some other sportsmen and artists, and showed him "his wife's (Lady Drummond's) beautiful paintings, which are really most artistic."

On leaving Beshika Bay they went to Salamis, for which, unfortunately, they had very bad weather. Rudolph was quite alive to the historical interest of the locality, but observes that to the non-historical mind it presents the aspect of "a few barren ranges of hills, though rich in loose stones, and upon one of them a still larger heap placed to mark the spot where Xerxes stood." At Athens they came across Lord Salisbury and his party, who had just arrived from Constantinople. Rudolph was much impressed with the grand view from the Parthenon, and he took special note of the extreme delicacy of the Ionic carving of flowers and ornaments in the Temple of Minerva, "so beautifully fine, indeed, that to look at it one would say it could not last a year, instead of some 2,500 years." But "the pillars of the ruins of Jupiter Olympus" struck him as "the finest in Athens, standing, I should think, about eighty feet high; the capitals are quite beautiful—Corinthian, which I think out and out the most beautiful, though



of later date than the Ionic and Doric style." He adds that they look as if they were made of one block of marble, though it is not really so. There was only time for a somewhat hurried inspection, but the general impression left on his mind was of wondering admiration at the superiority of ancient to modern art. "Men cannot," he says, "be the same nowadays as they were 2,000-odd years ago, for with all our new appliances of machinery, it would be difficult to conceive an edifice constructed of huge blocks of marble being placed where the Temple of Minerva stands, on the summit of a promontory." He is enthusiastic about the natural capabilities of Smyrna, where they went afterwards, and declares that "in English hands it would be one of the most charming places in existence in a few years, for the scenery is very fine and the ground most wonderfully fertile, in fact nowhere more so:" but under its present owners it is neglected, and miles and miles are left to lie fallow. His letters at the time are full of sympathetic references to the sufferings of his beloved sister, Mrs. Strutt, under her terrible bereavement, whom he was soon to have an opportunity of consoling in person. For in July the Pallas was paid off, and he returned for a time to England.

There are not many letters preserved during the second half of 1877, or in 1878, the greater part of

which he spent in England. One circumstance, recorded not by himself but by his brother, deserves mention here. Frank de Lisle, who was in Australia, had become involved in serious temporary embarrassments, and Rudolph, with characteristic generosity, pressed on him a loan of 1,000*l.* out of his own little patrimony, and his timely and very serviceable aid was gratefully accepted in a letter of December 12, 1877. That same month Mr. de Lisle was seized with his fatal illness, and Rudolph attended him with devoted affection till his death in the following March. In April he left Garendon, and joined *H.M.* turret-ironclad *Prince Albert*, at Devonport, as second lieutenant, not long before it was paid off. He found the ship in a filthy condition, and as the first lieutenant was not on board, resolved to have it thoroughly put in order before giving it up, and spent 20*l.* of his own on the work—for which his great-uncle, Captain H. M. Phillipps, R.N., afterwards reimbursed him—besides taking part himself in the painting and cleaning from 5 a.m. at every leisure moment, so that when the ship was finally paid off on September 5th, he got great credit for the excellent condition it was in. In October he visited Paris for the first time, and was much interested with all he saw, especially the picture-galleries and churches. He also paid visits to his relatives and friends at Ugbrooke,

Torquay, and elsewhere, but in November was back at Garendon, where he managed again to hurt his injured knee in skating, and had to spend a week in his mother's boudoir, which was indeed always a favourite resort of his when at home.

He spent Christmas Day at Garendon, but left on the following evening for Portsmouth, to embark on the transport-ship Himalaya, which was to carry him to Malta, whence he at once proceeded in H.M.S. Wye to Beshika Bay, and there, on January 17, 1879, he joined H.M.S. Shannon, to which he had already been appointed, and for the next six weeks they were cruising about in the Mediterranean, between Vourlah Bay, Cyprus, Malta, Sicily, and Naples. They had a very gay month at Malta, and Rudolph "did a great deal of riding, and occasionally took a mid out for a trip, which they always enjoy." He was invariably most attentive to the "mids" under his charge, as well as the "blue-jackets," and was a great favourite with them. The Duke and Duchess of Connaught were at Malta for a few days, and were of course much *fêted*, and Lord and Lady Bute also arrived there from Alexandria, and were lionised by Rudolph, who knew them before. During their short stay at Syracuse, he made the most of his opportunities, as afterwards at Palermo, for inspecting the antiquities of the place and neigh-

bourhood, and wished much to ascend Etna, but that was not possible and he had to content himself with the lovely scenery and "gorgeous sunsets" at its base. But he was still more delighted with a visit to Rome, for which he obtained four and a half days' leave, while they were at Naples; and such excellent use did he make of the brief interval at his disposal that he justly says no one could have seen more than he did—certainly very few would have managed to see nearly as much—within so limited a period. Descriptions of Rome are indeed common enough, but there is a freshness about Rudolph's record of his visit, in a letter to his mother from Naples, of June 10, 1879, which will, I believe, make my readers thank me for transcribing it here, as it stands:—

"Our party consisted of the first lieutenant, staff surgeon, staff commander, two mids, and myself. We left on Saturday, and next day saw the churches and heard High Mass in St. Peter's, which by the way is superb, and puts everything else of the sort I have yet seen into the shade. The mosaics in the dome are inimitable. Of course we went up into the ball of the dome, and were nearly baked, for the day was exceedingly hot. The singing was good, and some of the voices very fine ones; the organ was beautifully played. I had hoped to see the Pope, but no opportunity presented itself, and Monsignor Virtue (chap-

lain of forces from Malta), who was staying at our hotel (D'Angleterre) told me that, had he known of my arrival, he would have got me leave to be present in the Sistine Chapel for the consecration service of several bishops, and perhaps I might then have seen the Pope, and got what you wished for, viz., his blessing. I saw Bishop Clifford; he came and called on me, and was in great form; didn't know exactly when he was returning to England. Cardinal Howard I did not call upon, not having sufficient time for private calls, and having every moment of time taken up. Finding my shipmates were not keen about seeing churches, and one of them not caring for antiquities, I parted company with them and went a cruise by myself. Saw amongst other things St. Giorgio, interesting because old and for its associations, but otherwise a dilapidated place, with nothing but a few pillars of various styles, and a few rather grotesque frescoes. With the Pantheon I was disappointed, but after having been pillaged as it has been overhead one can't expect much ornamentation. One thing I must say struck me in Rome: I think as many men as women went to church; but somehow the former seemed rather ancient, and the younger men talked away and criticised the latter during the service, but apparently it did not much disturb their devotion. Saw St. Paul's (without); it is simply beautiful, and the stained glass windows are perfect.



The pillars are all of single blocks of marble, and the floor of marble reflecting everything above as though in the water. The three principal altars are of malachite, and were given by Nicholas I. to the Pope. The oriental alabaster columns are beautiful, given by the Viceroy of Egypt to Pio Nono. I had no idea that Nicholas had been so intimate with the Pope. I noticed a superb vase in the Vatican, also his gift to the Pope. I think I was more struck with St. Paul's than St. Peter's even ; but from the outside the former does not look much, and I thought my cabby had brought me to the wrong place. But I always had my map, and moved about without a guide, and found I did better without one when church-seeing. Saw the pyramid of Caius Sixtus, almost in the wall near the Ostiensian Gate. Drove round by the Latin Gate, saw St. Sebastian's and Catacombs of St. Callixtus, where I can't understand how the early Christians ever found their way out. I never saw any place so full of turns in my life, and I have been in the Catacombs in several other places. I must say I am glad one is able to hold one's own opinions nowadays in broad daylight. St. Prætextus, or some name like that, is very interesting indeed, and the tombs of several of the martyrs are to be seen with the inscriptions very distinct upon them.

“The Appian Way on either side is full of places of interest ; place after place, including St. Cecily's,



being all connected underground. Strange it seems, seeing the churches and tombs of such numbers of the Saints, whose names occur in the Litany of Saints, and this struck me the more when, having visited the various Catacombs and returned to St. Peter's, I found them beginning to sing that Litany. There was a procession on Whit Sunday, at which crowds of ecclesiastics of various degrees, acolytes, &c., assisted, and marched round the church. There were a good many officers from the other ships present, who seemed much impressed. From the upper gallery in the dome the music below sounds quite unearthly, so strangely beautiful; but I dare say we were there on an extraordinary occasion. Sta. Maria Maggiore and St. John Lateran I admired very much, and the view from the latter of the Campagna is very fine. I went out twice to see it. I also saw the steps brought from Jerusalem, up which you are supposed to ascend on your knees, but which I walked up by the ordinary way—you will be shocked, but I can't help it. I saw some English people doing it in the orthodox way. There were none of our fellows present, otherwise I should have been orthodox too. St. Philip Neri struck me as being the most devotional church of any, and there were many others which I saw containing pictures by well-known artists. The picture which struck me most was a 'Crucifixion' in St. Lorenzo's by Guido Reni. Fort San Angelo was illuminated, as

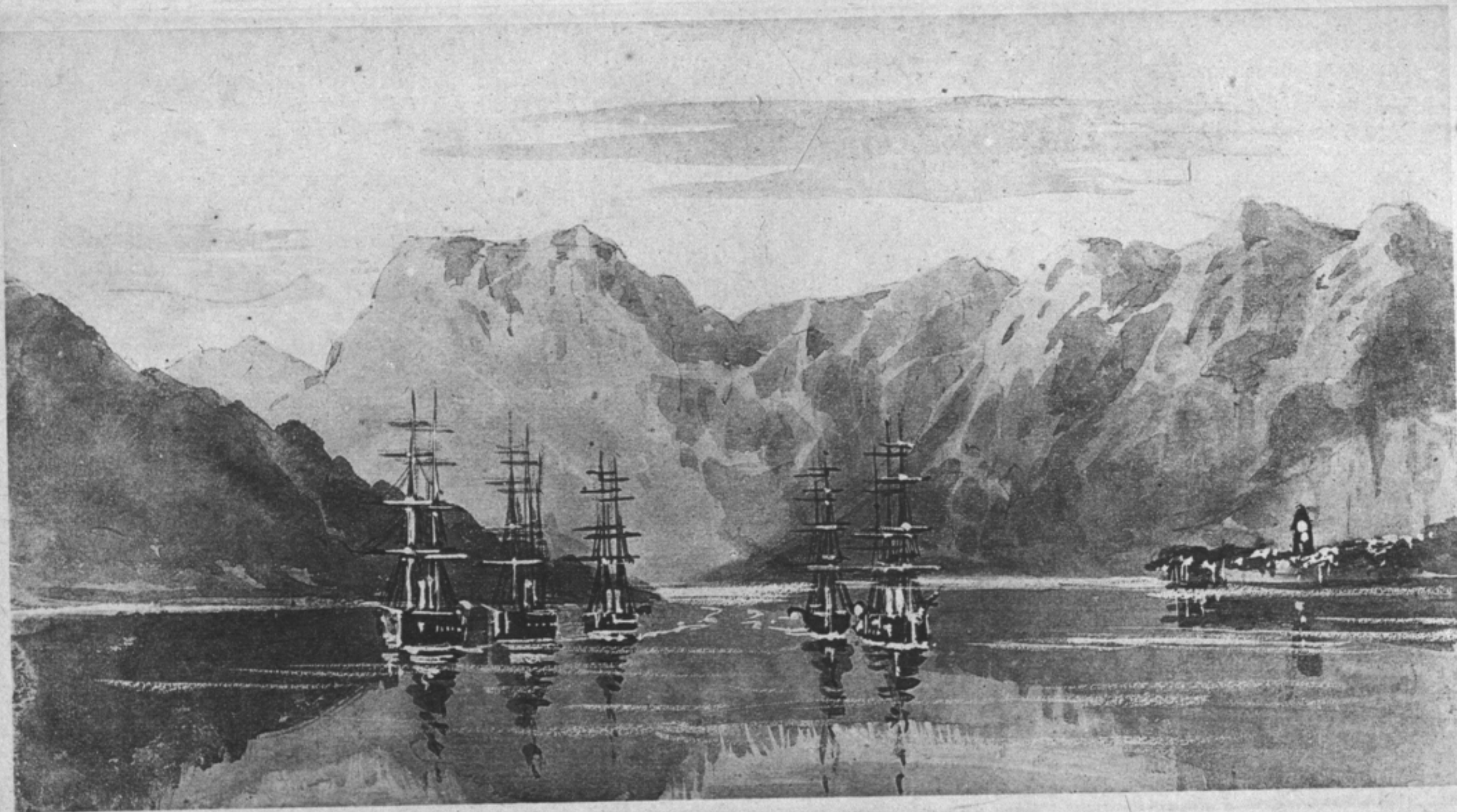
also the Tiber, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Constitution; the fireworks were well done, and the dense crowd very orderly, not a drunken person present. It seemed to me there was but little enthusiasm shown when the King of Italy appeared on the scene—a few hurrahs of an Italian stamp only. There was also a review on Whit Sunday, and the King looked a soldier, the Queen graceful, dignified, and very sweet-tempered, and the boy (H.R.H.) dressed in sailor's clothes, and nice-looking. The soldiers were not of a brilliant description, but the officers were smart and handsome fellows. Whit Monday, saw St. Clement's, and took some time about it, looking carefully at the frescoes, the names, &c.; they show clearly enough that in the Catacombs in pagan times vestments were worn. But of all this you have read. Each morning breakfast at 5.30, and back again by 9.30 to join our fellows, who by that time had turned out. Most of them looked at it in the light of any other place, but what can you expect if a person does not care for antiquities, &c. We saw the Borghese Palace and its beautiful picture-galleries; drove out to the Doria Villa, open one day a week—where are the lovely Italian gardens—Villa Albani, Quirinal, only a portion of it. The Capitol—what exquisite statuary there is there! The 'Dying Gladiator' struck me more than any other figure, I think. But how can one describe in a letter all one has seen

even in a short time, and if one could remember everything much would be stale to you, and A. C. has seen so much of it that no doubt he knows almost every stone. Where the ivy has ruthlessly been torn from the Coliseum cement has been placed where the roots were, and I should say it must have suffered in appearance. The Arch of Constantine struck me more than any of the others, and completely dwarfs Titus's. I frequently visited the Pincian Gardens; they are pretty, and one gets a beautiful view from the hill of St. Peter's, Fort San Angelo, &c. The military bands used to play each evening, and one saw the beauty and fashion of the place of an evening. The moon was at its full, and the weather lovely; the sunsets were very pretty, and the view from the Coliseum by moonlight very striking. I tried to get up Trajan's Column, but could not get hold of the man who had the keys. The obelisks are also fine, and seemed about the size of the ones in Paris and London. The Vatican I thoroughly enjoyed, the works of art one sees there are indeed wonderful, but when one thinks of the time the collection has taken one can understand it. The picture of the 'Last Judgment' in the Sistine Chapel is partly hidden by hideous framework behind the altar, to say nothing of the smoke and dust upon it. A portion of the Vatican was kept closed. Leo XIII. does not appear to move about much. The Swiss Guards are fine-

looking fellows, but the uniform seems ridiculous. The statues, pictures, &c., are very interesting, and I noticed that some of the best had been returned from Paris in 1815, but Napoleon made a good thing out of it, though a few things were returned. I have now neither time nor paper to say more, but will write again, but I can sum up by saying I was charmed with Rome and all I saw."

In a subsequent letter to his mother he says:—"Rome would delight you, for at a glance you would see the history of more than 2,000 years, and the gradual development of the Church as shown by the churches there would interest you still more." The Shannon soon afterwards sailed for South America, being ordered to the coast of Chili and Peru during the war between the two States, and reached Callao in December, which continued to be their ordinary station for more than a twelvemonth, though they touched occasionally at Iquique, Chimbota, and other points on the Chilian and Peruvian coasts. Rudolph was now in a region familiar to him ten years before, when on the *Cameleon*, and he found many old friends at Lima and elsewhere, and had a great deal of amusement in the way of dancing and private theatricals, as well as cricket and shooting, the latter, however, not being so good as in Beshika Bay; he also got through a fair amount of drawing. His letters are naturally full of accounts of the war in





CATTARO.

progress before his eyes, and while he appears to have sympathised more with the Peruvians, he considered the Chilians much the best soldiers. There occur also constant references in his letters to politics both English and foreign, especially during the elections of 1880, the result of which he of course regretted. He comments sharply on the "Liberalism" of the French Government, whose last move in their anti-Catholic—or rather anti-Christian—crusade had been to cashier all the navy chaplains: "what the Republicans understand by the term 'Liberty' is persecution of every one who differs from themselves"—a criticism not inapplicable to a certain class of Liberals nearer home. The Peruvian and Chilian war ended in the capture and burning of Lima in December 1880, where he happened to be at the time. In his first letter from Iquique more than a twelvemonth before he had described the battle of Pisagna, where "owing to the steepness of the hills and the want of water for two days the troops and wounded went without, and had not some of us [the English officers] carried up wine for the latter, they would have died of thirst. It repaid one the trouble to see the poor fellows' thankful faces, for many could not speak, but their look was sufficient." It is seldom he allows us even such a passing glimpse of his habitual acts of disinterested kindness. Of his own personal concern with the burning of Lima—which was set on fire

in three different places during the night—he says absolutely nothing at all, beyond mentioning the fact that he was at the time attached to the British Legation there. He was, however, made an honorary member of the Fire Brigade in recognition of the energy and courage he displayed in helping to rescue the sufferers and extinguish the flames. It was then the incident occurred which is noticed in Father Collins's funeral sermon, and which may well bring a blush, if they are capable of blushing, to the cheeks of those vicarious benefactors of their species who are eager to sacrifice "whole holocausts" of tortured animals in the alleged interests of humanity, while they are careful to administer anæsthetics, or rather *curare*—which paralyses the action but intensifies the anguish of their quivering victims—when, but only when, there is any danger of their own precious fingers getting scratched or bitten in the process.<sup>1</sup> Rudolph, whose humanity was of a simpler and less "scientific" kind, observed a poor canary bird in a cage in a burning house, and rescued it from death at imminent risk of his own; he brought it back with him to England, whither they returned in the following June. I have reserved for the end of the chapter the narrative, which shall be given in his own words, of his "trip on the most wonderful railway in the

<sup>1</sup> See Prof. Klein's evidence before the Royal Commission of 1876 on Vivisection, in the Blue Book.



world" and ascent of Mount Meigs in Peru, a year before, which, as will be seen, was a feat abundantly entitling him to take high rank in the Alpine Club. It is contained in a letter to his mother, dated "H.M.S. Shannon, Callao, June 8th, 1880:—

"Since I wrote to you by last mail, I have been a trip on the most wonderful railroad in the world, and one I have been wishing to make ever since in this place, viz., up to Chiata on the Oroza line. If you will recollect, in one of my former letters I described my trip as far as Matucana on the same railway, but was prevented from further progress by the landslip at the Jambo-de-Viso, where the whole side of the mountain came down, and utterly destroyed three sets of rails, and made the railway impassable for months. When it was first made Mr. Meigs (late) who undertook it, arranged that once made, landslips, &c., were to be cleared at Government expense, and this accounts for the time they took clearing it. But it was a work of considerable time, as nearly all the men usually employed, Indians, had been turned into soldiers, and marched to the front to fight against the Chilians, of whom they had never heard, and it never struck the Peruvian Government they might utilise a regiment lying idle at Lima to do it; hence the delay. Our great object in view besides the scenery was the ascent of Mount Meigs, one of the highest peaks of the Andes in the vicinity of the



railway, and one in which many people found a certain difficulty owing to the lightness of the atmosphere at the great height (17,574 feet). A party of seven officers from H.M.S. *Triumph* made the attempt, one only reaching the top; and several others from other ships also failing, it became necessary for the "Shannons" to do it. Nobody from the ward-room would attempt it, so we formed a party of a sub-lieutenant (Martin), a mid (Heyman), an engineer (Harding), and a boatswain (Job), to make the attempt. I was particularly glad of the company of the last, as I made sure he would be able to reach the top easily. We had to leave on Monday last, as, owing to the blockade, no early trains run from Callao, and we started at 8 a.m. from Lima, a certain number of ward-room officers going as far as Chosica to recruit their health, but refusing to go further. As is usual upon this railway, we were not twenty-two miles from Lima before the engine broke down, and the train had to be left behind whilst the former struggled into Chosica by itself. As I always travel on the top of the cars, so as to enjoy the scenery, I got on to the engine with two of our party, and reached Chosica before the people in the train knew why they had been left behind. At the hotel we found a family of Americans, three of them very pretty girls, so having introduced myself, and finding a piano and music, I proposed at this unearthly hour (9 a.m.) a

dance outside, which we had until the new engine arrived from Lima, and brought the train up. We had several songs, and altogether we had 'a good time' as the young ladies called it, and I felt almost shaken in my resolve to proceed further up the line, and came almost to the conclusion that there were better and pleasanter places than Chicla and Mount Meigs. But then it was necessary that "Shannons" should go to the front, whatever their private feelings to the contrary might be, so after breakfast, when the new engine was ready, we made a fresh start, tearing ourselves away and nearly two hours late. The road as far as Matucana I have described before, so will not repeat. But suffice it to say that it is only after one begins the zigzag of the Jambo-de-Viso that the real wonders of the railway begin. At San Mateo and Surco the whole scene changes, the mountain sides, which up to this time had been bare, now showed distinct signs of cultivation from the bed of the Rimai (here to its source really no more than a wide mountain torrent), to 2,000 feet above, and all arranged in terraces or steps, the sides being too steep to cultivate otherwise, and perfectly irrigated, though except during the wet season, which lasts only a short time, there is no moisture. This cultivation dates back to the times of the Incas, who declared, when the Spaniards seized the fertile valleys, that they would till the mountains, and did it. All the way up, one

saw traces of the early cultivation, in some parts for miles quite deserted, but this is accounted for by the way the inhabitants are seized and turned into soldiers, the women following their husbands as a matter of course, and letting their land run to seed, the Revolution thinning the population to a considerable extent. Above Surco (9,700) the railway winds round the mountain sides up a steep ascent (a gradient of 4 per cent., and in some places more) over bridges spanning the chasm between the mountain sides; at times running on the edge where below is a perpendicular fall of 1,200 to 1,500 feet; at other times actually in a groove, if one may so term it, cut in the rock, and with huge masses of rock overhanging, and certain to come down with the rainy season one of these days, through tunnels so small that one has hardly breath to spare when one comes into the open, and last of all over the 'Infernal Bridge' as it is called. One rushes through one tunnel, one sees light at the end of it, and then darkness again, and on one goes until at last it seems as though the whole train was plunging into the abyss, but it is over a swinging bridge, 170 feet long, and spanning the gap, and then out of sight again into a succession of tunnels, until one emerges, having forced one's way through the mountains. All this time the scenery has been gradually becoming grander: huge masses of rock, variegated in colour, grey preponderating:

the peaks capped with snow, whilst on the sides one sees occasionally distinct lines of pale blue in streaks, which are the silver mines, and wonderfully rich ones, but the only thing that strikes one is the almost impossibility of working them, as invariably they are to be found on the face of almost precipitous cliffs; still one hears of the richness in mines of the country, yet so it is—but how to work all this wealth is another thing, and it was this railway made with this object that was expected to develop all the mineral wealth of the country, but which up to the present time has been unable to do anything except to spend millions upon itself, and has had as much to do with the ruin of the country almost as the Revolution. But of course it may be urged that later will come the benefit of all these millions sunk, when the country is opened out.

“The weather was perfectly lovely, a deep blue sky, with occasional fleecy clouds drifting over the peaks, a delicious, cool atmosphere and breeze; in fact no more enjoyable weather could possibly have been. When one coupled with it the grandeur of the scene, the rushing torrent below, silvery streaks of water pouring into it from the mountain sides, with the intensity and variety of hues in the successive ranges capped with snow, one had a scene that can never be forgotten. In one place, a tunnel on a grand scale was cut to turn the direction of the river

from its natural course, and it passed through like a steam blast into its course below. That the hand of man should have been able to achieve such a work is wonderful, and there is no doubt after Meigs's engineering feat that there is no place which cannot be traversed by a railway where a man or a goat can pass. Chicla is at a height of 12,200 feet, and we were not sorry when we arrived, but strange to say, we did not feel the keenness of appetite which we thought desirable. The town consists of a very decent hotel, a church, and a heap of incongruous buildings, mostly inhabited by the Indians, and is situated in a valley between the mountains. The day we arrived was the glorious 1st of June, memorable for Lord Howe's victory, though chiefly on account of the anniversary of the Shannon and Chesapeake action; we kept up the occasion until past midnight with suitable speeches, hot punch, and songs, having ascertained there were no Yankees in the hotel. I can fancy your face when you see 'hot punch' mentioned, thinking no doubt a most improper use was made of it, but quite the contrary. However, two of the party were taken 'bad' (not the punch, but the rarefied atmosphere), and next morning I thought Harding was going to expire; he looked like it. Every one complained of pressure of the temples. I did not, so made several sketches prior to a preliminary

climb in anticipation of Mount Meigs. I noticed a high place through a gap in the mountains, and in a weak moment told one fellow I was going to have a look round from its summit. It took three hours and a half continual going to reach it, and being on an elevation of 17,000 feet, I also began to feel as though my head would burst inwards. The view made up for it, but the journey down nearly shook me to pieces (2 h. 20 m.), the last hour being in almost total darkness, down the side of the steepest hill I have ever climbed; in many places on all fours was the only way. I was almost given up by my shipmates, when I arrived feeling really shaken to pieces, so that with a splitting headache I was unable to look at food, and never touched anything for twenty-eight hours. I also during the night was so bad that I never expected to be able to start for Mount Meigs. However, daylight broke and I felt all right again, minus appetite. Mr. Schutz (owner of hotel), a guide, and we five started at 8 a.m. over the mountain track towards the summit tunnel (15,500 feet), the highest point of the railway, and where it begins to descend to Oroza on the other side at an elevation of 13,400. This at present is, and is likely to be, the extent of the railway, but the idea was to take it to the headwaters of the Amazon, only such vast sums would be required to carry it further that the work is entirely suspended.

The path where we rode in some places was so narrow that it was impossible for more than one horse to pass at a time, and on the edge of a cliff. One of our party, meeting a Llama with a load, had a miraculous escape of being knocked into the abyss below. These animals are the beasts of burden in the mountains, and beautiful creatures they are. We saw them in hundreds, some in a semi-wild state, others, as I said before, carrying burdens; generally 100 pounds weight each, though they have been known to carry 200 pounds. We reached the summit tunnel at 11.20 a.m., and then Mount Meigs was pointed out. My first remark was, 'Why it is a mole-heap,' for I had expected something almost impossible to ascend from what I had heard, and found quite the contrary. The only thing is the climate, or I should say scarcity of air, which gives a peculiar feeling to one about the head. Most people find difficulty in breathing; I never experienced the slightest feeling of the kind. At the tunnel there is an Englishman's house, where we put up our horses and started up the 'hill' at once. Before 200 feet were reached, Job and Martin were halted, the former, whom I expected to beat us all, lying on the ground and gasping for breath, his companion very little better; so they sauntered down again to the hut. Heyman and I walked up, without stopping except once, in thirty-eight minutes, cut our

names and the Shannon's, June 3, 1880, and came down in twenty-one minutes ; Harding getting within 600 feet of the summit, and also being done. I was never so disappointed, for after all anybody in good training might do it, and it is only 2,270 feet one has to go, and if one can stand the climate it is child's play. We were much pleased however at having succeeded, and the view from the summit of Mount Meigs is very fine: through a gap one sees right over the Andes, nothing above one, and a succession of peaks on the other side gradually getting lower and lower until lost in the hazy distance ; snow-capped peaks surround one, and one feels one is in perpetual snow, so distinct is the line on the mountains, but it is hard, and very easy to walk upon. One sees a succession of small lakes, and in two horizontal planes parallel to one another. I was told that geese were to be found in them, or a species of goose, francolin, a delicious bird, and prairie chicken, but I must confess that even had I had a gun, I don't think I should have been up to it. It takes some days to get acclimatised. I made a couple of sketches of Mount Meigs, &c., and then we started back, and with the jolting on the road got splitting headaches ; in fact so ludicrously glum did we look returning that we could not help chaffing one another on that account. Once more a few thousand



feet below, we began to feel all right, though two of our party are not right yet, and have been on board three days. We had a good dinner, my first after two climbs for twenty-eight hours, and naturally began to find one must take something to keep body and soul together; had a pretty jovial evening (no punch), without cigars, for smoking is difficult at high elevations, for one has no superfluous air to puff away. All the way down I went on the top of a car, and it is comparatively clean for no steam is used, consequently no smoke until Matucana, every carriage or car being provided with a break. The weather on our return was lovely, and we fully appreciated the trip; by me, one never to be forgotten. Still the scenery has the great drawback, want of trees, but it is green enough for all that, and some portions of it are like Dorlin,<sup>1</sup> only of course much grander though not so pretty. When we got to the levels by Chosica suddenly the red flag appeared, and we found the line blocked; huge blocks of rock had come down from overhead on the rails, and we just halted in time. In half an hour it was cleared by the gangs of workmen, and we proceeded, and nothing further followed.

“It is no unusual thing on this railway to have a landslip, and a rock coming down and knocking away

<sup>1</sup> Lord Howard of Glossop's place in Scotland.

a portion of the rails; the only wonder is that these accidents don't happen oftener, but somehow one always seems to be clear when the block takes place. When the accident happened which I mentioned in the beginning of this letter, a train full of passengers had passed half an hour before, over the very spot."

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LAST PARTING.

“ Brother, brother ! thou art gone, and I will not mourn thy going,  
Though thou hast been unto me like a river in its flowing ;  
For many a fresh and manly thought, and many a glorious dream,  
Like fruits and flowers of foreign lands, have flourished by the  
stream.

Yet, brother, it is well to part ; a sunset in the sky  
Sinks deepest in the heart when it is fading from the eye ! ”

*F. W. Faber.*

IN June 1881, Rudolph returned to England for the last time, landing at Devonport, and on the following July 19th, the Shannon was paid off. He had already spent a Sunday at Teignmouth, with the Dowager Lady Clifford, so often his hostess at Ugbrooke in the old happy days on the Britannia and since, and now he hastened to visit his mother in her new home at Onebarrow, in Leicestershire, whither she had recently moved from Garendon after the second marriage of her eldest son. He also visited his sister Gwendolen in her convent at Atherstone, and proceeded in August to Cambo to

see his widowed sister, Mrs. Strutt, who was then living in Spain with her two children, but had crossed the frontier for change of air. During the fortnight he spent with her he took the opportunity of going for a Sunday to Lourdes, where he was much impressed with the devotion and enthusiasm of the pilgrims, and with three cases of miraculous cure, of the reality of which he felt certain; he says he "went disbelieving, but returned convinced." The detailed report of his visit—contained in letters of his own and of Mrs. Strutt's—is very interesting, but hardly suited for insertion here. At the beginning of September he returned to Onebarrow, and stayed a week at Garendon with his brother before joining H.M.S. Vernon, at Portsmouth, on October 3. To himself, as well as to his relations, and above all to his mother, these home visits were always most precious and enjoyable. In the wear and tear of active service in all parts of the world he had lost nothing of the warmth and freshness of home interests and affections, as the constant recurrence to such topics in his letters would alone suffice to prove. And thus, while at Onebarrow, he threw himself into the harvest work in his younger brother Gerard's fields with all the eagerness and energy of a boy. But still, as ever, his mother's room was his favourite resort at every leisure moment. Mrs. Hopper—whose name has

been mentioned in an earlier chapter, as the heroine of his childish escapade with the little toy-boat at Gracedieu, and who was just then again in Mrs. de Lisle's service—told me that he could hardly be induced to tear himself away from her room when it was time to dress for dinner. In her was centred in its fulness the ardour of his generous and affectionate nature.

Soon after returning to England he had applied, by the advice of friends at the Admiralty, to go through the torpedo and gunnery course, and for that purpose, a few days after joining the *Vernon*, he was sent to the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, where he remained with short intervals of holiday till the following July. The Christmas of 1881 was the last he spent at Garendon, in company with his mother and all his four surviving brothers, including Frank, who had returned for a time from Australia. They met, however, once again, when he paid a flying visit of one night to Onebarrow at the beginning of March; three weeks later Frank sailed again for Australia, and by the end of the next year—to Rudolph's great sorrow, as well for his mother's sake as his own—both Frank and their eldest brother, Ambrose, had gone before him to the grave. He paid another short visit to Onebarrow in July, to meet his sister, Mrs. Strutt, who had just come back with her children to England,

and he afterwards, while on the *Vernon*, stayed one or two Sundays with her at her house at Bournemouth;—days consecrated for ever in her own and her children's hearts by the fatal event of Abu Klea. In October he went to Ireland to spend a week at Johnstown Castle with his old friend and comrade, Lord Maurice Fitzgerald, who had been with him on the *Britannia*, and again in the Flying Squadron, and with whom he had always maintained a close intimacy; it was their last meeting in this world. He joined H.M.S. *Excellent*, to which he had been appointed, at Portsmouth on November 25, but obtained a few days' leave to come to Garendon just after Christmas, and in the middle of January he came there once more for two days, when he took his last farewell of his family before sailing on the expedition from which he was never to return. The *Nepaul* conveyed him to Gibraltar, where on January 24, 1883, he joined his last ship, the *Alexandra*, and four days later they were at Malta. There he was well known already, and was destined during this and the first half of the following year to spend many happy hours with friends who could appreciate his worth, and—as will appear in the sequel—dearly prized their opportunities of intercourse with him, little as they then imagined that henceforth they would see his face no more.

From Malta they went to Fiume in the Adriatic, and then coasted about Greece and "the isles of Greece," and his letters contain glowing descriptions of the lovely scenery, of which also he made many sketches. Corfu, where they stayed a few days, he considered a most enchanting place—except Tahiti, the most perfect he had ever seen—and he greatly regretted that England should have given it up, for "since our departure they have deteriorated, and the place is comparatively poor; a good many in the Greek islands would be only too glad if we had them again, but I fear that will never come about." Everything he saw tended to increase his sympathy with Austria. He visited Cettinge, the Montenegrin capital, and after speaking of the splendid military road the Austrians had made there with the consent of the authorities, and expressing his belief that they would extend their frontiers to the southward and eventually reach Salonika, he says:—"How people can abuse Austria I can't think; one sees everywhere how she is civilising the countries she has occupied, and the difference is very marked between the Montenegrins and the Dalmatians, the latter almost as fine in physique, and having a civilised appearance, which I fear many of the former have not." They visited Ragusa, the Dalmatian capital, "a quaint old town, with a rather fine old Cathedral, built by Richard Cœur de Lion,"

### *THE LAST PARTING.*

as well as Zara and Spalato. In a subsequent letter he returns to the Austrians, declaring that "the more one sees of them the better one likes them, and the more one hopes they will extend their frontier, and reach Salonika one of these days, when the Turk is finished with." From Trieste he went with a party from the ship by train to see "the wondrous caves of Adelsburg, distant about fifty miles," and had never been so much impressed by any spectacle; "nothing can exceed the beauty of the transparent stalactites hanging down in clusters from the summit of the caves, whilst lights are placed in the best positions to show them off; a vast amphitheatre on entering, where a river from outside suddenly rushes in, spanned by a long bridge with rows of lights which throw their lurid colour upon the waters below, while almost in the roof of the cave, 150 feet above you, is a long line of lights on the path by which you return. The darkness outside the lights is so intense that you can, so to speak, feel it: the idea of Gothic columns and arches may have originated here, for you suddenly find yourself amongst lines of them, as though in a cathedral." The description is too long to quote in full. He nearly filled a sketch-book with rough sketches of the scene. He also managed to visit Venice, and naturally thought it a kind of enchanted city, unlike any place he had



seen before; most of all he admired the beautiful Franciscan church of the Frari, which serves to illustrate his discriminating taste. St. Mark's rather disappointed him, but not so the view from the Campanile.

There runs through all his letters at this period an undertone of abiding sorrow, for the death first of his brother Frank in Australia, and then of his eldest brother at Garendon, and of Lord Howard of Glossop, his brother-in-law, and he reverts to the subject again and again in language of deep feeling, where every word has a ring of unmistakable sincerity: there was never anything formal or conventional about his condolence, and least of all now, when a yet graver sense of the seriousness of life and the sacredness of earthly affections was growing on him, perhaps unconsciously, as the end drew near. To his mother especially, in all whose griefs he ever made himself a sharer, his heart opens itself even more unreservedly than before. Thus in one letter, written, he says, "in my middle watch (from 12 to 4 a.m.) when everything is quiet on board, and one is able to gather one's thoughts to something besides ship life,"—but which may be taken as a sample of many others—he speaks of feeling more than ever what a terrible year 1883 has been to her, and of his earnest hope that brighter days may be in store for her:—"I do indeed feel your heroism in writing and telling me everything [about

his brother's funeral at Gracedieu] whatever it costs you to write, and I assure you I feel and appreciate what a mother I have. God grant *you* may be spared to all of us for many years to come: you must indeed take the greatest care of yourself for all our sakes, and for mine in particular." This was written December 13, three weeks after his thirtieth birthday, when he was entering on his last year of life on earth. He wrote again a few lines at Christmas with a Christmas card he had himself painted for her.

In February 1884 they sailed for Alexandria, having a very rough passage, but only stayed there two days, and did not land their men, which under the circumstances was just as well. "If there is no chance of going to the front," he observes, "I confess I have not the least wish to do policeman in Alexandria, and after once landing the men it takes months to get them back to their old state of discipline when they return to their ships." By February 25th they were at Famagusta in Cyprus, where he was disappointed to find that an absurd law—passed in the ignorant belief that the snipe and duck would destroy the locusts which infested the island—prohibited all shooting after the 15th. He says that "the roads are simply awful, and the English occupation does not seem to have done much good in that respect." On the other hand, "it is at once seen how orderly are the people, now none of the rascally

pashas are there, but straightforward Englishmen ;” and “we ought at once to declare a protectorate of Egypt : it is the only solution, and if we don’t, the French one of these days will, and then there will probably be as much difficulty in getting her out as there was in Syria many years ago, if not an actual rupture.” He was much interested in exploring the ruins of the old Cathedral of Famagusta, and represents it as very like Bayonne in style of architecture, but an ugly minaret on one of the towers completely spoilt the general effect. For him, however, it had a more direct interest, as he discovered there amongst the tombs of the Crusaders the tomb of his own ancestor, “Sire John de l’Ile, with one lion rampant on his shield.” It was the only one with an inscription still clearly legible, but the date unfortunately was obliterated. He hoped the Cathedral might some day be restored, but thought “that day much further off than the restoration of St. Sophia.” They were at Alexandria again for a short time early in March, but he was unable to obtain leave to go to Cairo, where he had wished to visit his old friends the Wilsons, who had moved there from Malta for Mr. Wilson’s health, who was in a dying state. Thence they went to Suda Bay in Crete, and were again for the last time at Malta for April and the first part of May. There he had one very great pleasure, in meeting, for the first time since 1867, when he was a

cadet on the *Britannia*, his sister, Lady Weld, with her husband and children, who were on their way home from Singapore, of which Sir Frederick Weld is Governor. He writes most rapturously to his mother and his sister Margaret about it, the only cause of regret on both sides being that the time allowed them was so short—only four or five hours—as the Weld party arrived at 2.30 p.m. and had to sail the same evening for England. Sir Frederick Weld also dwells on this meeting in a letter to Mrs. de Lisle with great satisfaction:—"I was so much pleased with Rudolph; he is really a most charming fellow, and they told us at Government House—the 'Palace' at Malta—that he was the most popular officer in the fleet. He was so exceedingly kind to us, and he could hardly be persuaded to let me pay anything. He sent off such a magnificent basketful of bouquets, roses, &c., though I begged him not to send more than one or two at most. He is a fine, generous fellow, and I am sure a smart officer and a credit to a noble profession. Every one that I have ever met says so, and likes him so much. We had such a pleasant four or five hours with him in Malta, and all the girls liked him so much."

His letter to his sister Margaret, chiefly taken up with family matters, has one very characteristic trait. She had lost her favourite pug dog, and his ready sympathy, quickened in this case by his fondness for animals, was roused at once:—"I was indeed grieved

to hear of the death of that dear little 'Bertie : ' it is too sad, and I know how sorry you must be, for she has been such a companion to you : she was indeed the most charming little dog, but I am very glad you have such a nice little painting of her." On leaving Malta they had " quite an ovation, and the fortifications were lined with waving handkerchiefs."

He writes on June 10th from Port Said, where he had just had his first experience—it was far from being the last or the worst—of " the hot winds of the desert, just like a blast out of a furnace, temperature 95° in the shade. We were at work all the time, but as soon as that was over I sent for the barber and had my wig cut clean off, and made myself degrees cooler ; every one imagines one has just returned from penal servitude, but comfort is the great thing." In the same letter he speaks with deep feeling, as well for his own sake as on account of his bereaved family, of the death of his friend, Major Kerr, of the military prison at Malta, from diphtheria, owing to the scandalous state of the drainage there, which had already led him to send home his wife and children two months before : " a more charming and better man in every way never stepped, and such a valuable life ! His children are charming, such pretty children too—what a terrible blow for them ! The house where he died is a disgrace to the Government ; drains all wrong, and every one who has been there of late

years has been laid up with fever ; his own wife and children had frequently been attacked with it."

Nobody can be surprised to find Rudolph condemning in very strong language—not too strong for the occasion, but which need not be quoted here—the strange policy, or no policy, our Government was then pursuing in Egypt ; "and to think of all the valuable lives lost at Tel-el-Kebir and in the Soudan, and absolutely nothing gained !" He thought the idle "attempt to satisfy every one, whose claims are antagonistic to our own," was undoubtedly "sowing the seeds of a future great war," and in the meanwhile "all the good done since our occupation is being rapidly undone by the European, or at least English, officials being dismissed one after another through French intrigues." For two months his ship was "cruising about between Port Said and Alexandria." Then at last the order came, in the middle of August, which they had long been eagerly expecting, to commence the ascent of the Nile for the relief of Gordon ; too late, as Gordon had himself repeatedly pointed out, not to insure inevitable failure, not too late to insure for all concerned the extremity of profitless hardship and peril, for many the certainty of death. Our Government, after long hesitation, had finally made the fatal mistake of preferring the Nile route to the Suakim route, in the teeth of the advice of all local authorities and the

still worse mistake of deciding on it several months too late. In the middle of May, Colonel Burnaby had too truly said, "Every moment's delay in preparing an expedition diminishes Gordon's chances of escape. . . . Every day wasted is one more nail in the coffin of himself and his garrison." It is impossible not to think in this connection of a familiar passage in Shakespeare, which, if only we substitute the name of Gordon for Talbot, sums up with too cruel an exactness the true moral of the tale. The closing lines only shall be cited here:—

*Lucy.* Too late comes rescue ; he is ta'en, or slain ;  
For fly he could not, if he would have fled ;  
And fly would Talbot never, though he might.

*Somerset.* If he be dead, brave Talbot, then adieu !

*Lucy.* His fame lives in the world, his shame in you." <sup>1</sup>

But to Rudolph's ardent and adventurous spirit the summons was more than welcome, even then ; he yet hoped against hope for a success which was no longer within the reach of human effort. For him—as for others whom England could ill spare—it was the beginning of the end.

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare, *King Henry VI.*, Part I. Act iv. Scene 4.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### MORAL CHARACTERISTICS.

“ Type of the wise, who soar but never roam,  
True to the kindred points of heaven and home.”  
*Wordsworth.*

HERE, on the threshold of the deadly Nile expedition, which for Rudolph, as for so many others, was the highway to the grave, it may be well to pause a while and gather up a few salient points of a life and character so soon to be withdrawn “behind the veil” from human scrutiny. Of the religious fidelity which distinguished his career throughout, and interpenetrated and coloured all his mental qualities, I will speak more fully in a separate chapter, but what formed, in fact, the guiding principle of his conduct can never long remain out of view, and it helps to explain the antinomy in his person which may at first sight look perplexing, though it does but exemplify the apostolic paradox, “as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.” In the various notices of him by



his comrades in the Navy the word "cheery" frequently recurs, and there can be no doubt that his was a singularly bright and genial nature, which poured gladness on all around, and it was reflected in his sunny smile; as Tobias said of the Angel, Raphael, "he gave joy." Yet under this frank cheeriness of mien, which was not assumed, there lay a deep well of serious and even sadder thought, hardly dreamt of by messmates or acquaintances who only knew him slightly. It is true indeed that from the first he took heart and soul to his profession, and his career was a happy and successful one; he had a keen relish for enjoyment, whether in active sport or in social intercourse, and he found or made friends wherever he went. Yet he learnt very early—and his letters bear constant witness to it—that the dark are woven more thickly than the golden threads into the tangled skein of life. His cheerfulness never failed under the most trying conditions, but neither did it ever degenerate into levity. Of serious matters—as, for instance, the death of any of his shipmates, even when almost strangers to him personally—he speaks invariably with the deepest feeling, and a real sense of anxiety—especially when the circumstances of the case seemed more than ordinarily to suggest it—as to their fitness for the great change, and again as to the trial of the bereaved survivors. Thus, for instance, on hearing of the death of the French Prince Imperial,

he says: "I feel as though I had suffered a personal loss. . . . What a terrible blow to his poor mother! She has indeed suffered." When a man fell overboard from the Liverpool and was lost, in spite of all efforts to rescue him, he says he cannot imagine anything more awful, and shall never to his dying day forget the expression on the face of the drowning man. And he always records, generally at some length, the death and burial of any of his shipmates, though the event was not an uncommon one.

But his sympathies were touched to the quick by the death or bereavement of those with whom he was intimately connected by ties of friendship or of blood. He dwells in letter after letter, with the tenderest thoughtfulness, on the sufferings of his beloved sister, Mrs. Strutt, on the sudden loss of her husband through a frightful accident: "In all my life I never heard of a sadder event, to have all her happiness in one moment taken from her. . . . It is so sad to think of her now desolate home, where she was so happy and bright, and now everything is changed!" But he rejoices to know that "she has two such charming children" still left to her to live for. In a different way he was much affected, as we have seen, by the death of his uncle, the Rev. Charles Phillipps, and still more by the death of his great-uncle, Captain Henry Phillipps, with whom he had as a boy so often stayed at Torquay, when on the *Britannia*, as well as

afterwards. "I was indeed," he writes to his mother, "shocked and grieved when I heard of it, for he had always been so very affectionate and kind to me, and his influence several times had been useful to me. I used to enjoy my visits to him so much ; so full of anecdotes was he. He certainly had a wonderful memory, and he had such an impressive way of telling a story that he always centred one's attention on him. It is gratifying to see how much he was appreciated by every one ; in Torquay he was quite worshipped, and to be his nephew was an introduction that took one anywhere."

It would be easy to multiply such extracts, but the last serves also to illustrate another most winning idiosyncrasy of his—for it quite amounted to that—his lively and lasting gratitude for any kindness shown him, from the least to the greatest. Political gratitude has been defined—and the definition must be allowed to have a wider application—as "a keen sense of favours to be received." There was no trace of this mercenary element about Rudolph's gratitude, which was as strongly felt and expressed towards the dead as the living, and was the simple spontaneous outflow of a generous and affectionate heart and a rare humility. Some examples of this very marked trait of his character have been given before, and nearly every letter would supply more. But a few typical passages may be noticed here. Writing from

Valparaíso, in 1873, of the death of his cousin Beatrice, daughter of the late Lord Clifford, he refers to the mingled grief and resignation of her parents, and then goes on: "They are such delightful people, and have always been so kind to me, as though I too was a son of theirs; they have always been kindness itself, and deeply do I now feel for their sad loss. I had such a very nice letter from Lord Clifford, which I shall answer by the next mail, and little did I then think of the sad calamity that was to befall them!" But the strength and graciousness of this feeling is perhaps most conspicuously shown in little things. That he dwells again and again in letters to his parents on his lifelong indebtedness to them for his early religious training is eminently characteristic of his habitual tone of mind, but his overflowing gratitude for almost every letter received from them—as though it was an undeserved and signal favour—is in the present connection still more significant, while it also testifies unmistakably the warmth and constancy of his domestic affections. To give one or two instances from letters of different periods. When a young midshipman of fifteen, he writes to his mother from "H.M.S. Barrosa, June 16, 1869," in Plymouth Sound:—

"MY DARLING MAMA,—I cannot express in any way whatever what I think of your kindness to me ever since I have been here, writing to me so very

often. I was literally charmed with the way in which you have written (or, I meant to say, illuminated) my photo-book ; it is so very, very kind of you taking so much trouble about it for me, and I hope I shall be able to make it worth looking at." Some months later, from the Cape of Good Hope : " I wish to thank you for your three charming letters which I received last night at 9.30 p.m., an hour after we had come to. I was greatly interested with your letters : you gave me such a nice account of everything ; it is so kind of you always writing to me. I have received a letter from you at each place except Monte Video ; the letter directed to me there I received at Rio." Again, four years afterwards, he writes from Valparaiso, where he had found seventeen home letters awaiting him : " So fairly enraptured was I that I sat up till 2 a.m. reading and gloating over them." He had been so long without any, from accidental causes, that he began to fear they were " disgusted at never hardly hearing " from him (though, in fact, he wrote constantly , and were waiting to hear again before writing. " How thankful I am to find that it is not so, and that each letter, if possible, is more affectionate than the last. You cannot tell how deeply grieved I was to see in your letter that you hoped I was not becoming indifferent to you all by my not writing. It is precisely the reverse ; ' absence has made the heart fonder.' I am so sorry that I should have caused you pain of

any sort, but I am convinced that after receiving this you will think differently of me." There had, of course, been no real neglect on either side. So greatly, indeed, did Rudolph prize these home letters that he speaks of them to his sister Alice as "the mainstay of my life ; in fact, I don't really think I could live without them," and again to his mother he says : "No one out of England can tell the enjoyment of letters on a foreign station, where there is nothing to remind one of home ;" and he becomes "quite wild with anxiety" when some accidental delay occurs in their reaching him. On the other hand, he considered it a duty to write home from each place, and he very seldom failed to do so. His ordinary form of signature to his home letters, "With much love to all, ever your very affectionate (or loving) son," is itself characteristic. After the manner of all finely strung and sensitive natures, he was from boyhood keenly alive to the subtle force of association, even where to outward seeming there was nothing to suggest it. After he had gone across the Isthmus of Panama to Colon to see some friends off, who were sailing for England, he observes : "How strange it is that often little episodes of little or no interest recall the past to one's memory so vividly ; so much so do they with me, that often I wonder whether other people are the same. Going over to Colon, for instance, parts of the country recalled Gracedieu

vividly to my mind, though really not the least like." I am not aware that he ever wrote, or was much in the habit of reading poems, but there was an unconscious poetry about his whole nature, for his spirit was lapped in the genial sunlight of that

" April of the ages,  
That sweetly brought its showers of thought  
To poets and to sages."

But while his affections were centred in the home circle, they were not confined to it. He had the gift of inspiring passionate friendships, as we have seen before, and he was universally liked, one might almost say beloved, as well by his comrades as by the "middies" and "blue-jackets" under his control, and deservedly so. "We were together on board H.M.S. Shannon for nearly three years," writes Mr. Henry Savile after his death, "and I never knew him do an unkind action to any one the whole of that time; he was always a favourite with every one, and to know him was to like him." "There were many kind and generous things he did for his messmates," writes his friend the Hon. Lieutenant Grimston; "he was a fine seaman, trying to do that which was right to the benefit of all men, helping others and those in trouble. Up the Nile he was indefatigable, and when he got ill, was the best of patients, so Dr. May says, who attended him." "He never thought of himself," says Mrs. Hunnybun,

with whose family he had been intimate at Malta, "but always of others." Nor was his kindness at all restricted to those who were ready to reciprocate it. He was kind also "to the unthankful and the evil." There was a sailor who, from some whim or perversity of temper, conceived a violent hatred of him, and showed it on all occasions by insulting and annoying him and refusing obedience to his orders. After quietly enduring his insolence for some time, Rudolph called the man one day and pointed out to him that, if a formal complaint was lodged with the authorities, he was liable to be shot for disobedience, adding, however, that he bore him no ill-will, and would freely forgive him if he would try and do better for the future. The poor sailor was so overcome by this unexpected forbearance that Rudolph had thenceforth no more attached or obedient follower. It is not wonderful indeed that his men were devoted to an officer who would impose no task on them he was not himself ready to discharge, and who, even while still a midshipman, chose rather to brave the displeasure of his captain than send a man up the mast on a tempestuous night to reef the sails at the imminent peril of his life, and boldly told the angry captain—who had the sense eventually to acknowledge his error—that "a man's life was of more value than a mast." At the root of all these rare and precious graces of



affection, gratitude, kindness, forbearance, and intrepidity—or rather of his whole ethical disposition and tone of mind—lay that divine quality of absolute unselfishness which was his characteristic gift. Lord Charles Beresford, under whom he was serving in the Soudan, writes to his mother :—“ He had the grandest and most unselfish character I ever met with, and he was beloved by his men and respected by all his brother officers.”

Another side of the same lofty and selfless temper is revealed in a systematic omission, which cannot fail to strike every reader of his letters as only less remarkable than what they contain. He had, at different times, much to put up with in the way of hardship or discomfort, but no word of impatience ever escapes him, and his complaints, when he does now and then complain, are always turned off with a cheerful joke or a hope for better luck next time. That is significant, but still more so is the entire absence of any sort of ill-feeling or bitterness—I do not say malice—against those whose conduct had given him just cause of offence. His recognition of every kindness shown him was, as we have seen, prompt and ungrudging. He never “damns with faint praise,” but he blames—when he cannot well avoid blaming—with the lightest and most discriminating censure, always rather anxious to discover excuses than to aggravate the offence. In one case he feels obliged

to speak decidedly of the unfitness of a captain who had evidently made himself generally obnoxious, and says he would not care to serve under him again. But there is no personal abuse of anybody, least of all on account of any injustice real or supposed towards himself. A noble self-oblivion rendered him not so much forgiving as unwilling to acknowledge even to himself that there was anything to forgive. Most justly indeed may such a character be called "the grandest and most unselfish."

Rudolph never married or was engaged to be married. It will perhaps be asked whether he was ever "in love." That he had a singular power of inspiring very warm and lasting attachments among comrades of his own sex we have had abundant proof, and he evidently also had some dear and valued friends of the other sex among the families with whom he was intimate—almost as a son and a brother—at Malta and elsewhere. But there is nothing to show that, on his side at least, any stronger feeling than friendship existed, and it is certain that he never sought to encourage in others a sentiment he was not prepared to reciprocate. A nature more transparently open and truthful there could not be. On the other hand, as he says in one of his letters, "the very idea of a *mariage de convenance* is utterly repugnant to me." That there were some women who would have gladly welcomed

any further overtures on his part is likely enough, but he made no sign, and it is very doubtful if he would have done so, even had his life been spared. We shall find him presently in his Nile letters—the last he ever wrote—repeating emphatically a conviction more than once avowed in his earlier correspondence, that “if you marry you had better leave the service,” since marriage is a mistake for one who has chosen a seafaring life: and his heart was thoroughly in his profession. It is clear that Gordon had formed a similar estimate of his own career. Meanwhile on women as on men with whom he was brought into close relations he seems to have left the same indelible impression—that it was a privilege as well as a happiness to have known him. They looked up to him at the time, and look back to his memory now, with a kind of reverential affection, as towards a brother at once honoured and beloved. One, *e.g.*, with whom, as with the rest of her family, he had been on very intimate terms at Malta, says that her father—who died some months before him—“was simply devoted to Rudolph, and his last words were about him,” though they were not of the same faith; and she thus describes to his sister her own first meeting with him: “She was engaged in copying frescoes in the Knights’ Church at Malta, and was waiting one day till service was over, when she was immensely struck with the devotion of a young

man whom she had never seen before, but recognised at once as an Englishman. She watched him all through the service, wondering who he was, and thinking he must be altogether too good for this world." That same day they met at an evening party, and their friendship then began. When the family were leaving Malta, "he made her promise to attend a requiem for him, if she heard of his death, and repeated that he never expected to die in his bed. He also begged her, if she was in sorrow or trouble, to go and see Father —," a priest to whom he had been much attached from childhood.

There were other families at Malta with whom he lived on very intimate terms, and if he never seriously contemplated marriage, he showed always a remarkable love of children. Major Kerr, whose death was referred to in the last chapter, had six children, whom he used to invite to tea on the Alexandra, and often keep with him the whole afternoon, and they were as fond of him as he was of them, and looked forward with delight to these entertainments. Their ages ranged from three to ten, but he took such care of them that their parents felt no scruple in leaving them entirely under his charge. Thus again, Mrs. Hunnybun says, when writing to thank Mrs. de Lisle for sending her memorial cards:—"My elder children are so pleased to have one, as your son was as popular with them

as with every one else, and often used to play with them. He often came home with us after Benediction on Sundays, and would join in any amusement as though it was the one thing he cared to do. . . . He often spoke of his sisters to us, and when not certain if he approved of things done by girls would say, 'So-and-so would not like that,' mentioning one of them." Similar testimony is given by Mr. R. Connor, writing from Valparaiso : " He kindly consented to become godfather to little Mary Lilian, then just born, and the fact of his remembering the child in his will is only another proof of the goodness and true nobility of his heart. We last saw him when in the Shannon, and he was sitting with the child on his knee, just before we parted." His affection for his sister Alice's children, Edward and Laura, has been already mentioned ; " he was the one being," Mrs. Strutt writes, " that I could have trusted Eddie with to go to the other end of the world, such a noble, good man." And Sir Frederick Weld's account, quoted in the last chapter, of their brief meeting at Malta shows how even in those few hours Rudolph had endeared himself to his children. Another aspect of the same child-like tenderness blended with strength of character was exemplified in his love for animals, as it is written, " the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee."

Tenderness blended with strength—for there was most assuredly nothing feeble or effeminate about him. Courage is the proper virtue of those engaged in our naval or military service, but he exhibited it in no ordinary measure. In him, however, courage was no mere physical endowment—in that even brave men are sometimes deficient, though he was not—but the natural outcome of a high sense of duty in all matters great or small. If he wrote home by almost every mail because he thought it a duty to his parents to do so, he owed duties also to his shipmates, to his country, to his God, and he was absolutely fearless as well as faithful in discharging them. He never seemed to himself to be doing more than his simple duty, and he would not be content with less. Nelson's famous watchword acquired in his acceptation of it a higher and larger interpretation. Every one with whom he had relations, not England only, had a right to expect him to do his duty, and that because in every human obligation he recognised a higher duty to his Maker. And for most men, notably in a profession like his, the law of duty becomes also a law of self-sacrifice. But there are comparatively few, even of the best and bravest, so consistent as he was in their loyal fulfilment of it.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### RELIGIOUS FIDELITY.

“ Why should we fear, youth’s draught of joy,  
If pure, would sparkle less ?  
Why should the cup the sooner cloy  
Which God hath deigned to bless ? ”  
*Christian Year.*

THERE are many who have wandered far from the faith and innocence of childhood, whose hearts yet beat true, after long years of sin, chastened but not corrected by fitful paroxysms of remorse, to one dear and cherished memory, which sooner or later by God’s mercy shall recall them to their better selves. They have sinned against light and knowledge, against graces and warnings, against the holiest obligations human and divine, but through a reckless boyhood and a vicious—perhaps unbelieving—youth, while “driven o’er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess,” they have ever preserved intact one blessed recollection ; there has remained to them “amidst

the withered waste of life" one green oasis in the desert, the abiding fount of tears, one hallowed spot amid the surrounding gloom, which doubt has never dimmed and sin has never soiled; there still rings in their ear the unforgotten music of the first "Our Father," the first "Hail Mary," lisped at a mother's knee. And at length the truant soul yields to that sweet constraint, and the prodigal, drawn by the cords of earthly affection, returns in penitence to the forsaken heritage of his heavenly Father's home. This, for instance, is very much his biographer's account of the first "awakening" to a higher life of the amiable and excellent Captain Hedley Vicars.<sup>1</sup>

It was not thus with Rudolph, whose days were "bound each to each by natural piety." He refers indeed over and over again in his letters, at all periods of his career, with a marked and touching persistency, as we know, to the inestimable blessing of his early training and his conviction that "no children ever received a better religious education than we did," and in almost every letter to his mother he urges her to take care of her precious health "for the sake of her children, for none ever had such a mother." It reminds one of St. Augustine's constant reference to the early teaching of St. Monica. But from his heart those early lessons were never even

<sup>1</sup> See again a touching example of this in Lagrange's *Life of Dupanloup*, vol. i. p. 119, Eng. Trans.



temporarily effaced, of whom one who had known him well from the beginning could say long afterwards, when he was grown to manhood and had been several years at sea, "he is a darling boy, with a faith as fresh as a child's." I do not mean, of course, that he was faultless, or that he may not, under the very trying circumstances in which he was often placed, have yielded at times to strong temptation, but none who were personally familiar with him, or have examined the long series of letters, extending over twenty years, which present a transparent reflection of his frank and fearless spirit, can doubt that the fixed bent and purpose of his mind was ever in the direction of truth and right. If now and again he fell short, through human frailty, of the high ideal he never lost sight of, he quickly recovered himself, and needed no violent break in his course or sudden conversion, who had set God always before him from youth upwards, and whose path, in spite of faults and imperfections, was as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And this consistent uprightness and holiness of life was no doubt largely due to the indelible impress of home teaching and example, which never for a moment lost its hold on his trustful and affectionate nature. In his case most emphatically the poet's words were verified,

"The boy is father to the man,"

and thus he exemplified to the last the apostolic precept, too often exactly reversed in the conduct of professing Christians, to be "in malice children, in understanding men." His religion was no mere delicate exotic, but a flower of natural and hardy growth : there was no effort or formality about it, as of something assumed for a special time and purpose which sat uneasily upon him ; it was part of his living self.

This appears plainly enough from the way his mind instinctively recurred in each case to the religious meaning of all the graver events or trials of life and the true source of consolation in sorrow. The profound impression made upon him as a boy of sixteen by his brother Osmund's death has already been noticed, and how bitterly he reproached himself for what the world would count very trifling faults, adding :—"I will tell you that now I am determined with God's grace to follow in the same footsteps as those he has walked in before me, so that when I come to die I may be as well prepared for it as he was." And he thanks his sister Alice for copying out for him "Dr. Northcote's most consoling and edifying letter" on the subject. And this was no mere passing sentiment evoked by the sudden shock of an unforeseen affliction ; he dwells frequently in his letters as well on the death of Osmund as of others whose loss specially affected him—*e.g.* of his sister-in-law,

Mrs. Ambrose de Lisle, and later on of his brothers, Ambrose and Frank—and always in the tone of one to whom the *quatuor novissima* came home, not as a startling and unwelcome portent too serious to be ignored but too painful to dwell upon, but as a familiar truth habitually present to his thoughts. Hence, again, after a detailed account of the death of one of his messmates on the Cameleon, who had been called away before he was aware of his danger, he speaks with sincere distress of his unprepared state. On another occasion, when a very dear friend, many years his senior, to whom he had always looked up as the model of “what a soldier and a Christian ought to be,” had fallen into a deplorable, but happily, as it turned out, only temporary aberration, he could hardly find words to express his “deepest grief at the sad calamity” which had befallen him: “all his old friends can do is to pray for him and get others to do the same: I would ten times rather have died for him than that this should have occurred, for then I should always have had my indelible opinion of him, and should have had it to the last.”

His care for the religious welfare of the Catholic sailors under his charge, in taking them to Mass and reading prayers for them on board, has come out in the course of the narrative, nor was this with him by any means a mere perfunctory discharge of routine duties. A young coast-guardsman, who

was with him on the Prince Albert, told his sister, Mrs. Strutt, that he used to read prayers every day for those who were willing to attend; on Sundays, when they could not get to church, they were of course obliged to come. Lieutenant Grimston again, who was on the Alexandra with him, was struck with his being "so good at prayers, always taking the Roman Catholic sailors to church at Malta, and when on board he read service to them." One of the little manuals he employed latterly for this purpose is now in my hands, and in common with his other devotional books—his Bible, *Garden of the Soul*, *Following of Christ* Spanish Testament, and the like—its well-thumbed condition attests its constant use. He frequently also read sermons to the men, or himself addressed them, and would distribute religious medals, as rewards for keeping steady. There was no Catholic chaplain on any of his ships, the number of Catholics on board being small, but after one of the Christmas dinners on the Shannon, the Anglican chaplain proposed Rudolph's health, and took occasion to observe, in terms honourable alike to the proposer and the subject of the toast, how much edified he had been by the care he bestowed on his co-religionists, in reading prayers, &c., and seeing that they spent their Sundays in a suitable manner. "In fact," he concluded, "I may look upon you as my fellow- •

labourer in the vineyard of the Lord." His regularity in his own personal devotions, both in private and in attending church and frequenting the Sacraments, whenever there was opportunity for it—invariably, if it was possible, at Easter, and often at other times—was not less exemplary.<sup>1</sup> He mentions incidentally, in one of his early letters from Lisbon, how he had been fasting from 6 o'clock on Saturday evening till after 12 on Sunday, intending to receive Holy Communion, but the weather proved after all too rough to allow of landing, and he had to defer it till the next week. A very characteristic story of him at this time is related, in a letter addressed to Father Collins after his death, by one who was then an officer with him in the Channel Fleet, though on another ship, which shall be given in the writer's words. He justly designates the act recorded as "one which stamped him (Rudolph) even more than anything recounted in the funeral sermon, as possessing remarkable moral courage," though he appears himself to have partially misapprehended its motive. "In 1869 he and I were attached to the Channel Fleet lying at Lisbon. Each Sunday I met de Lisle at Mass with his men. Upon one Sunday the sermon was on Confession, preached by a Father Duckett, who wound up his

<sup>1</sup> He would go to Benediction, as well as to Mass, when he had the opportunity.

discourse with a strong and eloquent appeal to each of us to delay not a moment in going to confession, if in a state of mortal sin. Young de Lisle—he was then only about sixteen [he was fifteen]—immediately left his seat in face of a congregation of some 200 blue-jackets and half a dozen officers, and entered the Confessional. His example shamed three other officers and myself into following him, though we had not the pluck to do it in the open way he did.<sup>1</sup> We were 22 to 30 years of age. You do not overrate the extraordinary influence which he appeared to exercise over those with whom he was brought in contact, at all events if I may judge by my own case. Since 1869 I only met him once, yet I had a most affectionate regard for him, and though I 'retired ten years ago, I have always followed his career with interest, and hoped to have at some time renewed a friendship which,

<sup>1</sup> It may be right to explain for non-Catholic readers that what he did does not the least imply that he was at the time "in mortal sin." It is the usual practice of Catholics, though not held obligatory by Divine precept, to confess all remembered sins, mortal or venial, and it happens to be clear from contemporary letters of Rudolph's that he had been for the last two or three Sundays intending to go to Confession and Communion, but had been hindered by the state of the weather, which prevented their getting on shore. This, however, detracts nothing from the moral courage of an act which he must have known to be open to the misconception suggested by the above letter. We may venture to hope the conversion, of which the first beginnings are thus attributed to Rudolph's example as a boy of fifteen, has been perfected by his death and intercession.

I believe, was mutual. I will add—though I should do so with shame—that the first time I have knelt in prayer for years was to say one for him.” That simple record, if it stood alone, would suffice to prove that Rudolph de Lisle exhibited in no common measure the singleness of aim and religious fidelity which constitute the true secret of moral power. Of such the words are spoken, “Ye are the salt of the earth.”

Of his devotional habits there is the fullest evidence, but the subject is too sacred a one to be more than lightly touched upon here. Thus, *e.g.*, Mrs. Clutton—a relative of his—writes from Chislehurst, where the family were then residing, that, while studying at the Naval College at Greenwich, in 1875, he used frequently to come over on Sunday afternoons to five-o’clock tea, but “he never would remain to dinner, but would always go back in time for Benediction. Very few young men working hard as he was then would have made such a point of it.” Two of his sisters, as was previously stated, are nuns, and he would often write to ask for the prayers of the community. The last time he was in England his sister, Mrs. Strutt, wished to make him a handsome present, but he refused to accept

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that Benediction is not, like Mass, an *obligatory* service. Further evidence will be found in the final chapter of his religious conduct during his time at Greenwich.

anything except a common strong rosary, as his own was often breaking, and he begged that the crucifix attached to it might be indulgenced for the hour of death. This he used to wear round his neck together with some scapulars. Another little circumstance may be mentioned here, slight perhaps in itself, but significant as indicating his grasp of the principle as distinct from the outward forms of religious practice. Soldiers and sailors, for obvious reasons, are dispensed from the law of fasting. Rudolph, accordingly, during his three or four last years, made it a rule to abstain from smoking—which he was very fond of—by way of penance, during Lent and on all fast days. Bishop Ullathorne, one of his mother's oldest friends, on being told this said: "That is what I call a fine action, for many people are capable of brave actions, who will not deny themselves a pleasure; a young man who does that will always keep straight."

It will have been seen throughout that, while his large-hearted sympathy was free from all taint of narrowness or bigotry, and his recognition of goodness was always ready and ungrudging, whether in individuals or communities outside the Catholic pale, Rudolph was attached with all the intense, not to say passionate, conviction of a strong and generous nature to the faith of his childhood, from which he never for a moment swerved in act or thought. He



does not usually, without special occasion, refer to such matters in his correspondence, and in point of fact all, or nearly all, his most intimate friendships were with Protestants. But he felt, nevertheless, and said that something was necessarily wanting in the absence of entire religious sympathy ; " I know this in my friendships in the service, for there are times when one cannot speak to one's *friends* (I have about three) on subjects which interest us most at the time, without feeling there is a want of warmth, of sympathy, which one could receive from one of one's own persuasion. There are three other officers on board Catholics, but not one of them do I care much for ; they are not *friends*. By this I do not mean that we are enemies, but not "amigos" in the true sense of the word. I had one in this ship, but he left about eighteen months ago, and went home in the flagship. All my three really friends are Protestants, or rather two are." And hence he was anxious for the conversion of Protestants in whom he was interested, though he never dreamt of attempting to put any pressure upon them. Hence, too, the real pain he felt, and freely expressed, at coming across such deplorable practical corruptions as he found in the state of Catholicism at Panama, Lima, and elsewhere in South America ; *corruptio optimi pessima* was the instinctive conviction which wrung from him almost a cry of anguish,

when he found how the fine gold had become dim, and the temple of God was converted into a den of thieves, or—to cite his own indignant denunciation—“a Holy Sacrifice was made into a sacrilege.” His conscience was outraged, though his faith remained unshaken.

Such detailed and fragmentary notices as these can furnish but a very imperfect idea at best of the deep religious, conscientiousness which formed the underlying and dominant principle of his whole life and conduct from the first. It is the writer's fault if to all intelligent readers this marked speciality has not revealed itself unmistakably throughout. A letter to Mrs. de Lisle from the Rev. Robert Brindle, Catholic chaplain to the forces in Egypt, who has since been decorated by the Khedive in recognition of his distinguished services, sums up in his own words, “what everybody knows, that in the midst of an army he (Rudolph) led the life of a saint. You can easily imagine,” he adds, “that his life must have been a very remarkable one, since it turned the eyes and thoughts of nearly every one with whom he came into contact upon him.” And after thanking her for sending him memorial cards he says that he has placed one in his office book, so that Rudolph is sure to be often remembered in his prayers, and then goes on—the italics are my own—“*though I shall always have the thought that I ought rather to pray to than for him.*”

More than this it would be difficult to say : it is no slight testimony to his character that those on the spot, who had the best means of knowing what was the universal impression about him, did not feel able to say less. And this testimony of Mr. Brindle's is entirely borne out by that of the Abbé Bouchard, Missionary Apostolic in charge of the Canadians on the Upper Nile at the time, who was brought into constant and intimate relations with "this brave and worthy young man," who came daily to see him, and often passed the evening with him. He adds, in a letter from Cairo to Mrs. de Lisle, that Rudolph was a sincere Catholic, and greatly edified the Canadians, by whom he was so beloved that at his death each man of them felt that he had lost a brother. Whenever there was Mass, he was the first to appear, always coming in full uniform ; he communicated on his birthday, November 23, and again came to Confession and Communion a fortnight later, on Sunday, December 7—his last Communion—and was at Mass next morning, the eighth, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Some days later they parted for the last time, though the Abbé little thought he was never again to meet in this world one he loved so much. On hearing of his death he at once said Mass "for the repose of this beautiful soul," and says that he has never ceased daily to remember him at the Altar.

Some twenty years ago, one who had long held an honoured and responsible position in the great public school, where he had himself been educated as a boy, sent from his deathbed this farewell message to the boys of the school, and especially of his own house: "Tell them to keep innocency and take heed unto the thing that is right; for that shall bring a man peace at the last." The words of his favourite text were repeated from the pulpit of the School Chapel, and are inscribed beneath the granite cross on his gravestone. I know not if any could be found better fitted to describe the life and death of Rudolph de Lisle.

## CHAPTER X.

### LETTERS FROM THE NILE.

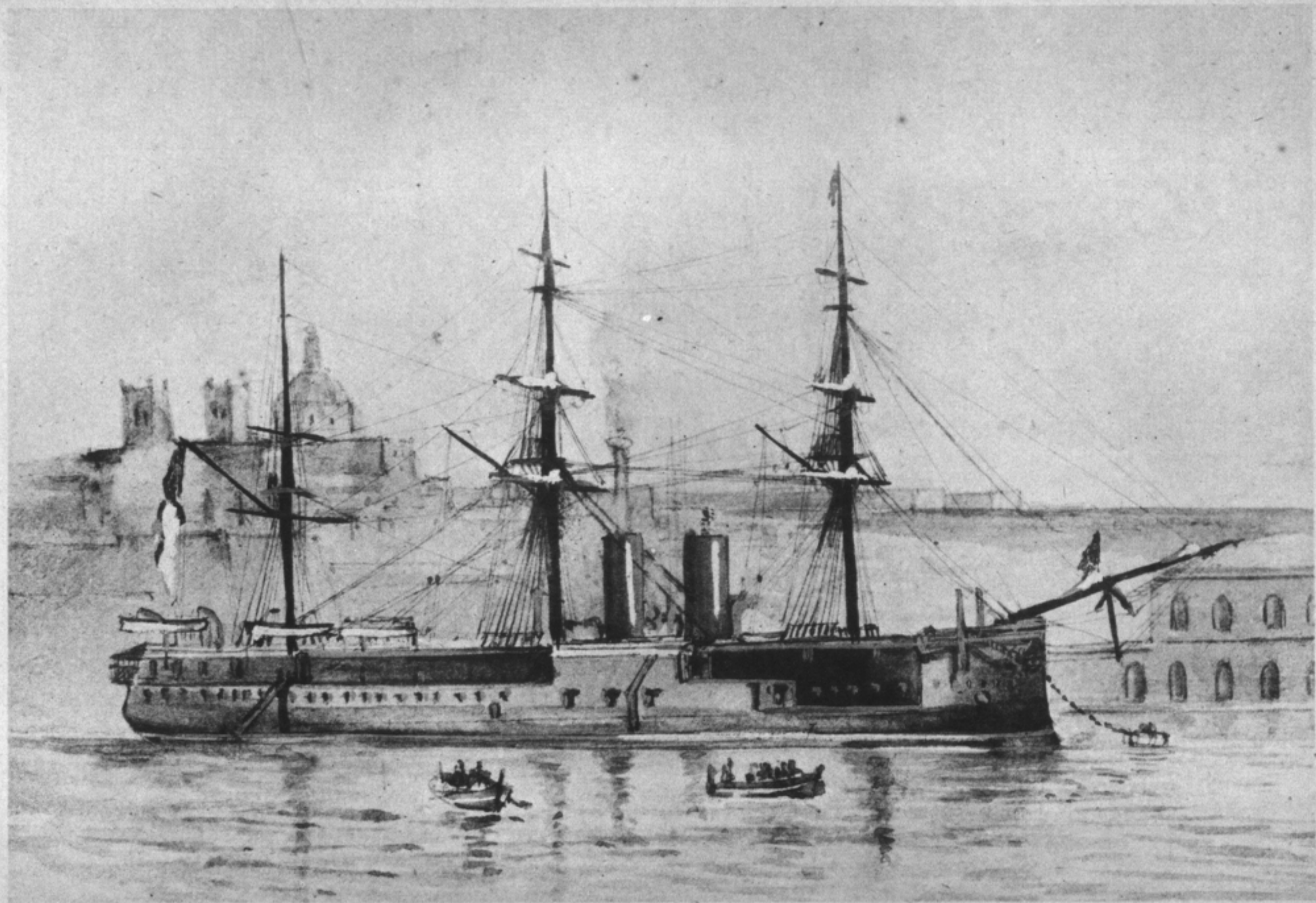
“Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,  
Lead Thou me on !  
The night is dark, and I am far from home—  
Lead Thou me on !  
Keep Thou my feet ; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene,—one step enough for me.

“So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still  
Will lead me on,  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till  
The night is gone ;  
And with the morn those angel faces smile  
Which I have loved long since, and lost a while.”

*J. H. Newman.*

AND now the end was drawing near, and he seems at times to have had a presentiment of it. Those who knew him best were indeed aware that he had always felt a conviction he would be killed in battle, and he liked the idea of dying in the discharge of his duty. It is a curious circumstance, well remembered by his sisters, that, while still a child in, the





H.M.S. "ALEXANDRA."

nursery, before he had learnt to write, he made several copies of two water-colour pictures painted for him by his cousin, the late Sir Henry Clifford, after his return from the Crimea, representing horrible scenes of carnage on the battlefield, and used to show them with delight to every one he saw, and distribute copies among his friends. During these last months of toil and harassing suspense, when death, never long absent from his thoughts, was almost staring him in the face, his nobility of soul shone forth, like fine gold tried in the furnace, with a yet purer lustre, as the shadows darkened round him which did but herald the dawning of the everlasting day. He is sparing in the use of religious phraseology in his letters, but the general tone often reminds us of what Gordon wrote from Khartoum, March 3rd, 1884 :—"I am comforted here in my weakness by the reflection that our Lord rules all things ; and it is dire rebellion to dislike or murmur against His rule. May His Name be glorified !" <sup>1</sup> And, in fact, during the difficulties and dangers of that terrible ascent of the Nile, rendered day by day more difficult and dangerous as the daily diminishing volume of the stream refused to bear its freight securely, Rudolph—ever to the front in the hour of peril—had more than one narrow escape of his life before the final crisis.

<sup>1</sup> See Preface to Gordon's *Reflections in Palestine*, p. vi.

The graphic narrative contained in his letters of that period has an historical as well as personal interest ; and my readers will feel that no apology is needed for reproducing it entire, with the omission of a few passages intended only for the eye of his own family or of intimate friends, or which repeat in substance what has gone before. There is the old ring about them of cheeriness and unselfish devotion to duty, blended with something of solemn, if not sadder strain, as of one who was in truth, though he knew it not, uttering his last farewell to his friends on earth. With the exception of one to Lady Clifford, which will be noticed in its place, all the letters are addressed to his mother.

“ H.M.S. ‘ ALEXANDRA,’ OFF ALEXANDRIA,  
15th August, 1884.

“ I have only time to write a few hurried lines, as I am just off up the Nile—starting from the ship at seven this evening. When I shall return again it is impossible to say, probably, from what I have heard, never again to the Alexandra, as we are going up with men, and are going to try and drag the boats (1,100 feet long) over the cataracts, but as the Nile is even now falling, the soldiers have declared the task impossible. The Admiral informed me that sometimes what others thought impossible the navy did not, and therefore we were selected to go and try.



One thing is sure ; I have now got the *task*, up the Nile, if not the trip of patrolling the river, which is much easier work. And after we have finished I hope, if General Dormer has command of the force, to get our company pushed on to the front.

“Up the Nile the weather, I hear, is somewhat warm, but I trust we shall come well out of it all, and if there is a chance I hope we may take it, but of one thing *you* may be certain ; we shall do our *best* in every way. We are starting on a good day, 15th August, so I trust everything may be successful. . . . I have capital officers with me ; Pollen is in my company I am glad to say, and a great friend of mine ; and Commander Hammill is the man I have to thank, for I hear he applied for me when he heard the work the navy had to do. All I hope is to be spared health and strength not to sell him and the navy generally in this matter. I shall write as soon as possible, but most probably only a few lines at a time.

“Good-bye, my dearest mother. For all our sakes do take the greatest care of yourself.”

“S.S. ‘BENJAH,’ OFF KENEH,  
19th August, 1884.

“I am writing this letter on the chance of sending it to-day from here, where we remain for the night, and to-morrow morning start off again for Assouan, where

we ought to arrive Thursday or Friday next. We then move on with all despatch to Wady Halfa, then on to the cataracts. And, now that the plan of proceeding is divulged, owing to the dilatoriness of the Government making up their minds a month too late, I doubt whether it is possible to get eight steamers over eighteen cataracts in less than a month from now, for the distance they have to be assisted is 230 miles, and this without roads and only short provisions, every pound of which has to be carried, and the steamers loaded and unloaded at the cataracts. However, we shall do our utmost, and our leader, Commander Hammill, has the reputation of being a very good man. Still I don't believe much in his method, but we shall more or less be able to use our own methods. But it is just this: after dragging these boats over the cataracts by the smallest mistake all our exertions may be lost in a moment, and there is no doubt getting the towing hawsers through the rapids will cause loss of life, and perhaps more than is thought. There is, I fear, if successful, no possibility of getting beyond Dongola, and then there is a march over the desert of 170 miles. This, unless the Bishereens, who are the great camel tribe, are friendly, will be more or less impossible, but it is confidently expected they will give every possible assistance for backsheesh; they nearly all will do anything for it.

"I hope the Government now know what they intend to have done, for otherwise it is not worth while giving us all a chance of sunstroke for nothing. I am sorry to say one of our best men was knocked down yesterday, after the work of transporting our baggage in the sun, but I now trust he will pull 'through. I have been keeping him with wet bandages and in the shade ever since. We have a doctor on board the *Alexandra*, May; but of course he can only order certain steps to be taken.

"We received a wonderful ovation on leaving the Cairo barracks, and had the band and pipers ahead of us during our march, three miles, to the station. We had expected to have remained there the night at least, but we were ordered off with all despatch, and we were glad to be getting to the scene of our work. This part of the Nile is hot; three soldiers were killed outright the day before yesterday, but they drink a lot of beer and then go out in the sun. I may be rashly judging the 46th, for these men may have been teetotallers, but I am judging by barrack life generally.

"We arrived in Cairo at 10 a.m. instead of 5, marched to barracks, had breakfast, provided by the 42nd Highlanders—and most civil they were—and drew our campaigning stores, for though we have to look out to feed ourselves, the commissariat provide the stores, and we have to arrange to carry it. We are taking mountain tents with us, &c., &c. Train left at

7.30 p.m., the General (Nicholson) coming to see us off; Captain Hammill (our Commander) kindly introduced me to him just as we were leaving. We got to Assouan at 10 next morning (17th August, 1884) and got everything on board this craft, then organized our arrangements, &c. on board, for we are still a perfectly organized small ship's company, consisting in all of seventy-three men and officers, and our direction now is, *Naval Brigade, Wady Halfa, or above*. There is absolutely no moisture in the air, and one's ink dries as fast as one writes, and for this reason the weather is not at all unbearable. I have had a lot of work to do already in the sun, and, thank God, I haven't felt the sun as yet, and if the weather was damp it would be perfectly unbearable: At Suakin in the Red Sea the marines are burying a man a day from sunstroke. . . . Do not be afraid if you do not hear for a long time from me after we pass Wady Halfa, for there may or may not be any opportunity of sending letters, and we have rough times before us, but at last I am on the spot, and let us hope something will turn up this time. . . . Already two more lieutenants have been appointed to the Alexandra, so I expect I have finished with her. . . .

“P.S. If only there can be a chance of securing what Everard failed actually to secure<sup>1</sup>, how happy

<sup>1</sup> The Victoria Cross. Everard, Rudolph's elder brother, whose name has frequently occurred in the course of this narrative, joined the

I should be, but I fear our work is only helping soldiers over the Falls, and there we shall remain. But who knows ? ”

“ P. S. ‘ GHIZEH,’ NEAR WADY HALFA, UPPER NILE,  
25th August, 1884.

“ We are now at last approaching our destination, and from here we disembark and go by train only four or five miles up towards the second cataract, which is our base of operations. There we shall have our camp, and by degrees get our stores ready to attempt hauling the vessels over the cataract. We are to have, if they all turn up, from 3,000 to 5,000 niggers, Arabs, &c., to do the manual work, but of our work more when it begins, and when we know what it is we have before us. The Nile has fallen already four feet, but the natives seem to think it

Native Infantry of the Bengal Presidency in 1854. He reached Meerut May 4, 1857, and on May 10, when the mutiny broke out, his regiment joined it, and Colonel Finnis was killed at his side ; but he remained unhurt, though he had been called upon to read the address in Hindustani. On the same day he joined the 60th Rifles, when he obtained a commission on the application of Colonel Jones, who made him his orderly officer. The following memorandum appeared in the *London Gazette* of October 21, 1859, p. 3793 :—“ Ensign Everard Aloysius Lisle Phillipps, of the 11th Regiment, Bengal Native Infantry, would have been recommended to Her Majesty for the decoration of the Victoria Cross, had he survived, for the many gallant deeds which he performed during the siege of Delhi, during which he was wounded three times. At the assault of that city he captured the Water Bastion, with a small party of men ; and was finally killed in the streets of Delhi on the 17th of September.”

will rise again in another three weeks' time. The later the Nile is the better our chance of success. All along the river we continually meet diebhurs, or house-boats, full of stores, coal, &c., but owing to contrary winds and the strong tide they are in the same position nearly they were in a week ago, viz., off Korosko. I think I cannot do better than give you a short account from my journal, a few lines each day.

*"August 15th.*—Landed at Alexandria and went to Cairo with our party, consisting of Commander Hammill, Lieutenants Pigott and de Lisle, Sub-Lieutenant Pollen, and two engineers and seventy-one men. . . I find I have been repeating so I omit everything to Luxor.

*"August 20th.*—Ruins of Luxor and Carnac are splendid in their way, but we hurried through, so that of course we could only get a general view without being able to see any of the hieroglyphics or inscriptions except the ones on the pillars, which are clearly discernible even at a distance. I made a few sketches, but Carnac and Luxor are places where one could spend days sketching, and a column reproduced on an intelligible scale would take a few hours' work of itself, so you can imagine the magnitude of the attempt to do the whole thing as the ships steamed by. At Luxor, which is a charming place, groves of palms and other trees, splendid

ruins, a decent hotel, a Catholic church, numerous diebhrs (house-boats), &c., some on their way up, others with their large sails down for drifting down with the stream. In the afternoon passed the Tombs of the Kings, and the two colossal figures of Rameses II. (sixty feet high), on the left bank. Arrived at Esneh, met Major Stuart-Wortley and party; they were nearly lost in the desert, got off the track, but in sixteen hours fortunately found it again; otherwise they would not again have been heard of. Got news that Major Kitchener was returning from his expedition across the desert to Khartoum.

"*August 21st.*—Passed some ancient ruins, Tombs of the Kings, 8.30. Arrived off Kosmombo, but being pitch dark, as we were close to the ancient temple, we landed with lanterns and spent a couple of hours looking at the ruins. The inscriptions were in many cases quite perfect, and the paintings as perfect as if put on only a few years. It shows what a wonderfully dry climate it is. We have had the temperature from 95° to 103° under awnings, and found the weather not at all unpleasant, whereas at Port Said with the glass at 82° it was almost unbearable.

"*August 22nd.*—Arrived at Assouan at 9.30, and had to make arrangements for a train to take us over to Philæ, where also there are splendid ruins of temples, &c. We turned over to the train and

started at 2.30 for Philæ, having finished the first part of the picnic, and turned over to the Ghizeh one of the vessels commanded by naval officers—viz., Reed, and a great friend of mine—for the trip to Halfa. One of our men unfortunately misbehaved, broke into our wine store, and had to be sent to a vessel to await passage to the Alexandra. One man went down with the sun, but since recovered.

*“August 23rd, 5 a.m.—*Passed two companies of the 35th Regiment on their way to Halfa. 2 p.m., stopped and took on board Sheik Baskeir, a splendid fellow, very handsome and, like all Arabs, most dignified. He is friendly, and chief of the tribe of Bishareens, which counts 17,000 men, stretching right across to the Red Sea. They are all mounted on camels, or rather dromedaries, and his was a beautiful creature and snow white. He came on with us as far as Korosko, where he was given a splendid reception by his men, who gave a war-dance on the banks, and a most interesting performance it was. I landed in the evening and made a sketch of his party, who had followed on by the banks.

*“August 24th.—*Arrived off Korosko about 4 p.m. Landed and saw the fort made by Egyptians under English officers. How hot they must have made themselves over it, digging a ditch eleven feet wide and fourteen feet deep all round it; but I think



there isn't the smallest possible chance of the Mahdi's followers ever attempting an attack on the place, for though it is the caravan route, it is three days and a-half from the nearest wells at Abou Hamad, so neither men nor camels would be at all fit for work after marching across the desert, and likely enough the troops will be moved along. Major Shakespeare showed me over the fort, and his hut was a picture. He pitched it in the most picturesque place, with a huge cactus kind of plant at the door, and from the inside one imagines one's self in a ball-room, without the ladies however. I wish our tents were like theirs, which are tall and roomy, which means coolness, but ours are mountain ones and consequently very low; we can just get inside (room for two) stooping. These other ones are, perhaps, in the centre thirteen feet high, any amount of ventilation. We tried to get Indian tents in Cairo, but failed owing to their scarcity. Before we left we were visited by the English officers of the garrison (600 strong) and our friendly sheik left us. I did two small water-colours of him, and he wanted them; so I then did two for myself. He was exceedingly pleased with the attention shown him, but he took a special fancy to Pollen's pipe, so it had to be given to him. He wanted my tobacco, which was very little, but this I could not quite see, so I filled his pipe as often as he wished whilst on

board, but to take the whole lot I couldn't and didn't quite agree to, however much my admiration for him. It is astonishing the amount of ruins there are. Only to-day we passed a fortified Roman town, which looks as old as some of the Egyptian monuments, but of course it is not ; but the astonishing part of it is that no end of the inscriptions were covered with stucco by the early Christians, and thus preserved in the marvellous way they are. There are here and there Copt villages, and in the part of Egypt below Kenh there are a great many Coptic Christians, about one-third I was told. There is one monastery we passed which I sketched, where a very curious custom prevailed. As soon as a diebhr appeared coming up stream, out sprang the monks, stripped, and swam off to the vessel—for backsheesh for their monastery, I suppose! This custom has now been stopped by the Patriarch at Cairo, and just as well I should think. Round Korosko and for many miles on the left bank is all sand, of a peculiar red-yellow colour, with here and there clumps of date-palms, whilst on the other side are barren hills, brown and purple in colour, masses of red and black granite—the former very much like Aberdeen—and a thin strip of land cultivated and lines of palms, small villages dotted about, whilst the sakiehs worked by oxen in this part irrigate the land close to the bank, which yields no less than three crops per year ; but further on,

300 or 400 yards inland, owing to the difficulty of supply, it yields only one crop a year, for there is never any rain—but what exquisite tints morning and evening! anything more beautiful there could not be; and I simply smoke and take or rather devour them. Unfortunately at the last moment I had to pack up, as we expected to leave at 8 p.m., and left instead at 4. So many colours were left behind and much useless gear brought, which I shall leave behind here.”

“CAMP OF THE NAVAL BRIGADE, ABKAR,  
*September 8th, 1884.*

“Since I last wrote we have been shifting about, camp and all, first with a party of men in one place and then in another; and I regret to say the Nile has been falling ever since, and now it is no less than two feet lower than it was, the result being that the chances are infinitely small of hauling the steamers over.

“On the 3rd we started off in the ‘Nassif Kheir,’ and, after eight hours of the hardest work, succeeded in getting her over what is called the First Gate of the cataract, about three miles by water from our camp, and there she has remained ever since. Commander Hammill made up his mind the Nile was going to rise again, and so we waited in the vain hope, and now we shall have to make the best of the low Nile. After surveying the best route we came to the con-

clusion that the outer one was the best, and now for some reason or other, with less water, we are going to try the other. I went down with six blue-jackets, right down over the third and lower gate, and I came to the conclusion that, even with the men we have (nearly 4,000 Dongolese and Esneh men) it is impossible, without smashing up the paddles, to get her through the narrow gate. The difficulties are endless, such as getting the men from one island to another, for the current rushes over ridges of rocks in a foaming torrent, and the Esneh men won't think of facing the water. About 200 of the others are magnificent swimmers, and go in, in the boldest way, and are a good deal of use driving through some of the parts; but, as you may imagine, it is one thing to get over them and another to work the hawsers satisfactorily to be of real use. We are going to make another attempt to-morrow, and with what success I will report in my next letter; but as there are two correspondents you will probably by to-morrow evening know all about it. The idea of getting the other steamers over is abandoned owing to the Nile falling, but it is most provoking that this year it should have started going down ten or twelve days before the usual time, but there it is; and I fear we shall have nothing to do if we fail to get the 'Nassif Kheir' over, and in that case this trip will not have turned up trumps;—but who can tell?

"One thing I do know is, we are soon likely to go bare-footed, for already I've destroyed two pairs of boots: leather perishes at once, unless they get soaked in oil, and that one hasn't got in any quantity, and during the day the rocks, which are of black granite or syenite, and the sand get so hot you can't touch them. The result is that the nails drop out of one's boots, the stitches crumble away, and off come the soles! but fortunately I brought two more pairs with me. The heat, as registered by thermometer, is very great—went up to  $110^{\circ}$  under double tents—but the heat is dry, and beyond parching one's throat and boots, which are much more important, one gets on very well. We have had a few cases of sunstroke, but fortunately no really bad ones, and personally I have only had a few hours under the tents in the middle of the day for two or three days since being out here. I ride camels all over the place, and the pleasure of riding an Arab pony after it! Colonel Trotter, a friend of mine at Angush (Wady Halfa), lent me his one day to ride out to camp, and the difference was something marvellous. One jolts, when one is trotting fast, one's very soul out of one, and the other was like an arm-chair. When the camels are doing their jog-trot six miles an hour it is pleasant enough, but everything depends on a comfortable saddle and a good trotting animal. Everything dries so fast that, even if one had time, there is very little use in trying to paint,

and especially a place like this, where the skies are all one tint : for week after week one never sees the shadow of a cloud, and as long as the sun remains up one is broiled. I always find about 9 a.m. the most trying time of all. We heard a great deal about crocodiles up here, but *I* have not seen any, though others declare they saw two. Anyhow, we bathe (the officers up here), though we will not let the men risk it, and though the water is as dirty as the very worst ditch-water, it is sweet and good. I drink simply buckets full of it, and at one time expected all sorts of direful calamities owing to it, but it must be all right, for the natives drink it all day long. But to give you an idea of the amount of mud there is in it, in the whole of the irrigation work it is owing to the water evaporating and the residue of mud left, which really raises such fine crops of maize all down the river banks, for underneath it is all sand up here. There are not even any date-palm trees, and no shelter of any sort or description, but out in the sun one doesn't want it.

“ The first thing I did—as we all did pretty well—was to get the whole of my hair cut off as close as scissors would take, and now it stands straight on end like a scrubbing-brush, and regularly dried up. I got dear Alice's letter a few days ago—the only news I have had for a long time. . . . By the bye, a few days ago we were carting niggers across

the river, and we got shot down one of the rapids, and it is astonishing how invariably a back wash got one clear of the rocks: exceedingly exciting it was. Yesterday we spanned the river with a hawser with block on. It was one of the worst places, and now we can run niggers across without the danger of the hawser snapping. The 35th sailed yesterday in boats, when we ought with luck to have been with them to tow them along to Dongola."

"NAVAL CAMP, ABKAR, NUBIA, 2ND CATARACT,  
*September 18th, 1884.*

"At last I have a little time to write to you, the first time for a fortnight, for even when our men have been having an hour or two to spare we have been surveying the best places for securing necessary ropes for hauling steamers over. During the last fortnight it has been a case of work from twelve to fourteen hours a day, and the last few days ten miles through loose sand added on. But with the exception of two or three men with dysentery we are all right, and not sorry to-day to have a day in camp, as, thank God! we have at last got the steamer, 'Nassif Kheir,' over the cataract. The river during the time fell seven feet at the worst place, Bab-el-Kebir, and the width varied from thirty-eight feet to half a mile; innumerable islands, more rocks, shoals, etc., swift-running currents, and worse eddies. But here we are; some of us have



had more escapes than one, and the whole affair is not devoid of danger. Going through one of the easy bits a boat swamped, and three men were unfortunately drowned. Within two days their bodies were found by the swimmers, 300 of whom were on the look-out, and all were buried outside our camp—a very mournful scene—in the same grave and together, as they were drowned; three volleys over the grave, and all over. The curious part of it was that a man belonging to the Monarch, Commander Hammill's coxswain (the man who steered his boat), Woodcock by name, floated up close to the Commander's tent, about a mile from the place of accident. One man was drowned (Hares) trying to save the others, and two more were nearly done for, but we were lucky not to have lost two boats' crews, for we were shot down the cataract. The ship herself ran tremendous risk at times, but, thank God, she is all right now. The task seemed well-nigh impossible, but it has proved possible. Sand and dust, winds and flies, are the worst things we have to put up with, but nothing can stand the heat. The rocks and sand during the day become so hot one can hardly stand on them, and already two pairs of my boots have succumbed, and a third I give another week or so over the sharp granite rocks. The bone of my knife broke and crumbled away, and everything perishes in the heat. The nights are, however, cool, which is a great com-



fort, for were the nights like the day nobody could stand it for long. But for the honour of the Navy I am glad to say we got our steamer over. A short time ago I got a charming letter from Alice [Mrs. Strutt] which gave me the news of C——'s engagement, and a day or two later one from Lady Clifford, and these are all I have had since up here ; but with the ship moving about and no regular transport, one can only get one's letters by chance with any speed, though sooner or later they are sure to turn up, and thoroughly acceptable they will be. Three Sundays running we have been working all day and never a moment to one's self, but now we may have easier times on Sundays, unless we go to the front. I am rather amused to see in the papers about the disturbed state beyond Wady Halfa. I have been thirty miles south of it nearly, with nothing but a stick, and never met with anything except profound respect from the natives, and yet the papers talk about the armed train, etc., and patrols along the Nile as far as Dongola. Everything is quiet, and now the 35th are gone on the moral effect will be very great on the natives, for the Mudir thinks his men, about 200 Circassians and Turks, a formidable array, and with these even he kept more or less order ; once the troops are there everything will be more or less quiet. Though we are so far to the front, we really know little or nothing of what is really going on, and whether we are going

to have the Soudan under our wing or not. 3 p.m. —Just heard that in all probability we are going to form part of the Naval Brigade, so we must be on the look-out for better times. We are to try to take another steamer over, but the wear and tear of having to drive 3,000 niggers, who hardly understand one, is tremendous, and it has turned me white! ‘Thirty large cargo boats, etc., etc.’—this is Lord Wolseley’s telegram. To-morrow, I suppose, we shall begin the whole affair over again with the experience gained by the first steamer’s passage over. I can hardly write, so maddened am I by the flies, dozens settling on my raw nose and lips, but by degrees one gets accustomed to these torments, and, thank goodness, there are no mosquitoes. The food we get is very good, and enough, but later on we shall be away from all luxuries in camp. Here we have a cook and a servant, and so are well off, as long as we can make the most of what we have in the way of comfort. In a blanket under a tent one sleeps very comfortably indeed, but I shall be delighted when the real business begins, moving on with the troops.

“How are all the family getting on? I trust M—— is well. She must write, for cut off up here a letter of any sort is a great boon. I hope G——’s crops have done well this year, and he is as happy as may be. . . . I know what grief, my dearest mother, this day or rather anniversary

brings to you.<sup>1</sup> If only one day I could get the Cross you should then have had; but there is infinitely more peril on the flood than in the field out here. But I trust and pray we may meet when this is over, for I don't expect to rejoin the *Alexandra* again, I fear. I intend to write to Lord John shortly; he has been most civil to me, and I have a chance which most naval officers would like to have. You must pray it may turn up trumps.

"With love to all, and ask G—— to look out for my affairs."

It will be seen from the following extract from a letter of the same date as the last, addressed to Lady Clifford, that Rudolph had himself incurred far more serious personal risk than—with his habitual thoughtfulness for others—he cared to let his mother know.

"Who can tell what will be the end of this business up here? Do not let my mother know, but I am singularly fortunate to be writing this letter now, for twice with my boat I was swept over the cataract getting hawsers (large ropes) down to the steamer when she was in danger of smashing up; and the second time my boat dashed over the rocks and water flowed over her, but fortunately I got the end of rope to steamer, and saved the men, two very nearly gone. Two days after, in an easier place the boat swamped,

<sup>1</sup> His brother Everard was killed at Delhi, September 17th, 1857, as has been already mentioned.

and this time three men were drowned, and we nearly lost two more, one insensible when got in. The whole of this expedition out here has been and is full of dangers to life and limb. The heat in the day tremendous, but fortunately perfectly dry : . . . the Nile instead of rising has been steadily falling, and is now seven feet lower than it was a fortnight ago. The same way I take it impossible to get another steamer over without knocking holes through her, but we shall see what can be done. We have now been under tents over a month, and the nights are now cool, which is a great blessing. Had the Government made up their minds a month or five weeks sooner, I believe we should have got two or three steamers over by this time. To give you an idea of the work in hand, in addition to our 80 men all told, we have nearly 3,000 niggers of all sorts—Dongola and Esneh men ; the steamer is now in the former whilst we are in Nubia. Since up here I have never seen a crocodile, but the natives say there are always some about, and one was shot opposite our camp whilst the steamer was lying here."

"NAVAL CAMP, ABKAR, NUBIA,  
*September 26th, 1884.*

"Since I last wrote to you I received your two most welcome letters of the 26th August and September 3rd, so I am now thankful to have such late news from home.

“The first steamer we got over the cataract went all right as far as Sarras, and then struck on a rock two miles from that place, and is at present repairing, but expects to get on to Semneh to-day or to-morrow. We have had another steamer, the ‘Ghizeh,’ to take up. Till yesterday the Nile has been steadily falling, and we had to find a new passage at the Second Gate to get the steamer through, there being no water in the passage of the rapid where the ‘Nassif Kheir’ passed through. We all but got through it after four days’ hard work, but the difficulties of laying out the hawsers over such long sweeps of rapids, and the rottenness of the hawsers sent to us [was such] that we were doomed to failure; but on the fourth day (yesterday) we got her over, and at present she is in here at the camp. It seemed at one time as if she was never coming any further without being wrecked on the rocks. You never saw such a place; nothing but rocks, rapids, and eddy currents, which swing the ship about anyhow. To-day the steamer is repairing, and to-morrow moves on again. At Bab-el-Kebir the ship had to be dragged up-hill over a sheet of water with high rocks on both sides, but this vessel will have to go by another channel, as the sheik says there is no water; but I trust the Nile may rise a few more inches, and then it is possible. Montgomerie in a fast ‘picket’ boat is up here, but then she steams thirteen knots and tears over the bad places

remarkably well. He expects to be at Sarras to-day. Another launch has been sent up by train.

"Pollen was nearly killed by a hawser (rope) yesterday, but got off with a few bruises. The friction lit up a box of matches in his trousers pocket, and he was somewhat burnt. As the squeeze came, a nigger got between him and the rock, and so that poor wretch got the phizzing box of matches against his bare skin and couldn't move. We have thin ropes from rock to rock over rapids to get at the ships, and look out for the ropes to drag her and make her fast: a few touches with a pen will give you a sort of idea.

. . . I find being accustomed to athletics comes in most usefully, for at first the tars were somewhat shy of the *bridges*. Last Sunday knocked a plank out of our only boat and she was rapidly filling, but got her ashore just in time. Got to steamer by ropes and had a couple of hours' carpentering, and she has worked fairly well ever since; tin-lined the boat inside and out near damaged part. The blue-jackets were somewhat amused when one turned up with a bag of tools and all necessities, after an hour's absence, and somewhat pleased when the boat was repaired, for we were all cut off from mainland. There was only one carpenter on board the steamer, and he could not get over by rope bridges. We are out at 5, and sometimes get back by 7 p.m., often without anything to eat during daylight, for, though we take food with us,

when it comes to time to eat work of anxious kind is going on, and likely enough lunch is cut off by a cataract—but we generally make up for it when we return to camp. The next few days will be harder work still, but the climax comes always at the main gate. I often think how everything one learns comes in, and by your giving us when children our boxes of tools I learnt a lot of carpentering, and that has come in most useful; sewing also, for the desire of seeing one's self look somewhat clean has been detrimental to one's clothes, and I find myself when there are a few minutes to spare patching them. Fortunately another pair of boots has turned up from the ship for me, and that is the chief thing, for the heat burns everything through. I am afraid you must think me terribly egotistical, but as you always like to know what one is doing, I purposely write a good deal which might be omitted.

“When we left the ship, Pigott was in command of the party and I was second, but since then Hammill (Com.) has been the head, and now they have appointed a captain; so one finds one's self going down the list; but we all have separate duties to perform, so there is no clash, and I have charge of the camp and company when they fall in, and *not* as a working or cataract party. I see they have made appointments of lieutenants to the Alexandra, and I suppose we have all finished with that ship. I confess I am



sorry for it, in case this is a shorter affair than one expected, and as for one's thinking for one moment of being promoted out of it, it is outside the possible chances, unless one gets into action. One thing is I never knew what work was till up here, and I regret to say our sailors frequently see officers doing what they ought to risk doing themselves. I regret to say it has been noticed by military men who have been with us. That accident we had has had curiously enough a disastrous effect upon them, and together with the rotten boat we have to work in they hate the water and work too, if the truth was known, but no doubt it will wear off in time. In the meanwhile it is the most cold-blooded work one could have, and every day might see the last of one; but of course one knew that to do what the authorities called an impossible task could not be done without risk. I wish we were at the front, for two regiments have now passed us, and I feel sure no glory will be got out of the cataract work, and the wear and tear is enormous. . . . .

“Our only hope is you may be spared to all of us for many, many years to come.”

“NAVAL CAMP, ABKAR, NUBIA,  
*October 22nd, 1884.*

<sup>1</sup> “I am quite shocked to think how long it is since I have written to you, but, even had I had time, till

<sup>1</sup> This letter is written in pencil, but quite clearly.



to-day I should have been unable to do so, having knocked a finger out of joint ; but it is going on all right, as this letter shows. Our life and existence up here has been of late monotony itself, hauling nuggars (native sailing boats) over the cataract—always the same old thing, and nothing to vary the work. A regular slave drive now it is to get these natives to do any work at all, and they are heartily sick of it. They are, of course ‘volunteers’ (?), and have soldiers to look after their interests and prevent them bolting off to Dongola, but no end of men have deserted in spite of every precaution. The ‘Ghizeh,’ I am glad to say, is over Semneh Cataract at last. The Egyptian soldiers just made the difference, and she went over flying. At Semneh there are really only two gates, one bad, but the difficulty with the last was, owing to the abruptness of the shore, to get the hawsers placed properly. Anyhow, I trust she is on her way to Dongola now. We have had several weeks hauling the nuggars over the Bab-el-Kebir, but we really look upon that place now as matter of fact, having hauled between thirty and forty over ; and now there are all these villainous ‘Wolseley boats’ to get along. Anything more unsuited to the river could not have been devised, but of course, in spite of the soldiers bringing them along themselves, *we* have the job, and when in smooth water at Sarras we turn them over. I fear the expedition by these boats will

be slow, but all this time Lord Wolseley has been at Wady Halfa he has, no doubt, matured his plans. We have fifty-three boats in our camp at this moment, to be moved on when the present supply of nuggars is over. More disgraceful boats I never saw, old hulls, leaky, sails frequently in shreds, yards sprung (nearly broken), some without rudders, others without masts; so we had ample opportunities of dismantling the wrecks to get the lame ducks along. The weather has been much cooler of late, and at night pleasantly cold, at least before dawn; but a week ago we had a series of sand-storms, and on our return, almost blinded and pitch dark, I found on two successive nights my tent blown down, and last night half the camp was on the ground, and it poured with rain for an hour or so. When it subsided the air was simply perfect, but the dust had found its way in everywhere. The flies are fewer than they were, for at one time they were simply maddening; fortunately so far there are no mosquitoes, so we have undisturbed nights.

“All the generals have been up here (eight miles in length) watching the work going on, and Lord Wolseley expressed himself pleased. In August, when we asked for soldiers to do some of the pulling, it was said they couldn't do work from 10 to 3, too hot. Our routine till a week ago was 5 a.m. turn out; 6 march off—(a few times left camp at 5 a.m.)—six

miles along loose sand, get boats hauled up bad places, march back at dark, dine and turn in. Yet not entitled to military allowance! But I fancy we shall get it eventually. Lord C. Beresford is going to take the matter up, and so it ought to be.

"We now work fewer hours, for every one would have been played out shortly; we leave at 7 a.m., and get back by 6.30 or 7 nominally. Yesterday, to save our boots, they sent the 'tars' thirty donkeys to help them along a bit. The guides lost four on the way, rather a bad beginning. Anything more amusing I never saw than the men returning to camp last night, some being shot over the beasts' heads, some dropping off over their tails, some dragging the donkeys along; others had made a clean bolt for the desert, and the tar in his jaded state was quite unable to get them again. I fancy this is how we lost them. The officers have camels now, I am thankful to say, but what saddles! Pollen has been very seedy indeed of late, and so has Dr. May and Pigott with a shocking cough, and now it seems to be my turn; poor food, I suppose, and nothing but hard work, and something disagreed, but the worst of anything going wrong is that there is always the danger of dysentery. One or two of our men are in hospital with it, and ten more sick from various causes. But I hope I shall be all right in another day or so. To-day, for the first time, I have had to remain in camp—the only

officer who had held out till now uninterruptedly. How are you, my dearest mother? I am shocked at doing nothing but talk of self. Do take the greatest care of yourself for all our sakes, and mine specially. How is Margaret—and Gerard? I hope he is well; Everard and Bernard too. The latter is at Cambridge by this time, I suppose.”

“ABKAR, *October 25th, 1884.*”

<sup>1</sup> “I am only writing a few lines to enclose my ‘affairs.’ I have written everything out quite simply, as also my debts, so by writing to the addresses given, the bills would be found to be nearly correct, and my pay will probably have mounted up to a good deal more than I have put down. I paid off about 30% in the Alexandra, and that was hard enough. . . . I forget whether I told you what was the matter in my last letter, but I have been laid up the last four days with dysentery, though up to the moment of my getting it, I was never better in my life, and unfortunately worked hard one day afterwards in the sun with it on me. Since I have been laid up, I have taken nothing, to give my ‘within’ perfect rest, and I am now, I trust, nearly all right. But of course here, if one has to knock off meat, there is nothing but a little biscuit to eat. If one had milk one could stop

<sup>1</sup> This letter contains his will, and the rest of it is taken up with minute explanations and directions, showing his considerate and kindly mindfulness of the interests of all concerned.

these things at the outset. Most of our men have been knocked down right and left, though so far only one bad case amongst them, caused probably by the weather. In the meanwhile don't go and alarm yourself on my account, for I hope to be about again shortly. Whatever *you* do, do take care of yourself for all our sakes. Lord Wolseley, they say, now leaves his *boats* behind him to come as they can, and pushes on to Dongola for the 28th with mounted infantry.

"P.S.—I answered dear old Lady Hillyar's letter yesterday, or rather one written for her by some one else."

"CAMP OF THE NAVAL BRIGADE, SARRAS,  
*November 1st, 1884.*

"How glad I am to be able to write and tell you I am all right again now, for I know how pleased you will be to hear it, especially as I was able to move on with our men here. We are now at the extremity of civilisation, and in a few days I suppose we shall be in the desert proper. I was absolutely starved for six days—nothing to eat but a little boiled rice and one cup of soup made out of preserved meat, and not very strengthening. However starvation managed to pull me round, and now I am perfectly well and have been doing my regular duty for some time.

"Lord Wolseley said, when he started for Dongola, that the cataract party would follow, for which I am

truly thankful ; but in the meanwhile we are bundled about from one end of the place to the other. We 'broke camp' three days ago and came on here, where we now are in a very pretty place, and I flatter myself our camp (naval) is the neatest of all, for the military are massing here *en route*. I take it in a few days we shall get our 'Brigade' together ready to move on. We are going with the boats I believe. I hope you saw my sketches (three in number) in the *Illustrated* of October 4th. I have sent several others, but so far they have not put them in. Their own special correspondent came to our camp exceedingly grumpy, and remarked there were nowadays a good many too many officers who sketched, and he was very sick to find I had sent a series of cataract sketches to his paper. But I think he said some had been done without seeing the places, which does all right for the British public.

"The Canadian boatmen are very fine fellows and work the boats very well indeed ; a pity there are not more of them. One was, however, unfortunately drowned yesterday passing over Semneh Cataract. So after all the tremendous hard work we had, Reed has been and wrecked the 'Ghizeh,' and as she had passed the last really bad cataract before Dongola, it is really too sad ; fortunately no one was drowned. At extreme low Nile I believe they will be able to put new plates on the hole, and next Nile she will be

available, but I trust we shall have finished before next July or August.

"By last mail I sent my will, which I trust is not necessary just yet, but might be; anyway, as well to have it made out. . . . When we were started off we were allowed no cook or servants, so we had to get Arab ones at our own expense, and as we made up our minds to keep a regular mess as long as possible we pay 3s. 6d. a day to cover expenses—but there is sure to be a good bill at the end of the business. But anyhow I hope the allowances will cover expenses and I shall be able to remit most of my pay. I hope ~~we shall~~ get the military allowance. . . . If only one thought there was promotion at the end of this, I shouldn't care a straw about the dollars. I do hope we shall get right on; but I fear we shall only get as far as Merawi, which I take it is as far as the boats will go. I am still hoping we may be able to get a couple of machine-guns, and then we may go on, but we are a very small force unless attached to some regiment, armed as we are with rifles only. I believe a certain number of the Wolseley boats are to be given to us to get along as best we can.

"I take it we shall accompany a detachment of boats; but anyhow, be this all as it may, we have sent in a list of the original cataract party, and they are to be the first to move on. I think it quite possible that Lord Wolseley will send a regiment to undertake the



attack on Berber (46th), and, if he hears at Dongola there is no great force outside Khartoum, will move across the desert with the mounted infantry alone.

"I have just received your charming letter of the 16th October, and I was indeed delighted to hear you were so well and as active as ever. It was indeed most kind of dear old Lady Hillyar writing to Lord John [Hay] and Lord C. Beresford about me. . . . She wrote me a very affectionate letter the other day, or rather one which was written for her, and I promptly answered it. She is really a wonderful old lady. May you be spared to her age and longer. I hope by this time you know I have received all your letters and what pleasure they gave me. I also got a letter from Edwin. . . . A good many people think there is trouble brewing in the Transvaal, so likely enough there will be another business when this is over, if nothing occurs elsewhere in the meanwhile. The plague of flies is diminishing, I am thankful to say, and the weather is comparatively cool in the day, and at night it gets quite cold ; before sunrise one finds one's self hauling one's blanket round one. It will be cold enough in the boats. The 38th move on in a day or two's time, if the boats are ready. I fear my letter must be a series of repetitions, for I have had to write it at odd moments. 10 p.m.—To-morrow I am off with Commander Hammill to Tanjür Cataract, about fifty miles from here. We are going on camels,



starting from Semneh Tuesday morning, to have a look at the 'bad places.' The Nile has gone down 7 feet at that place above, and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet below, *the Gate*, which means any amount more bad water. I fear a certain number of the boats will be lost *en route*, but one must expect that. Please thank Alice so much for her delightful letter—also for the rosary. The crucifix went to pieces almost at once, but I am going to lash it up."

"NAVAL CAMP, SARRAS,  
*November 10th, 1884.*

"So many thanks for your two last letters. I am so thankful to you for writing so continuously, and I am glad to say lately I have been getting my letters quite regularly. You have no idea, on a business like this, how one looks forward to getting the mail. One's employment is varied: since up here one has had to fill up holes in a sinking nuggar, repair a boat which would not otherwise float, fit a rudder to a large nuggar, frequently mend my unmentionables, darn my socks till nothing was left except the darning itself, when they too had to be discarded, repair boots, and lastly, make a table and chest or rather shelf for boots and clothes, so that now one's tent is luxurious. Making a ramp and building a way for launching steam-boats has been our service job of late. We launched two to-day, and another comes to-morrow. The nuggars (river boats) have been wrecked right

and left above the Semneh Cataract, and frequently it has been done on purpose, I take it, by the pilots, who want hanging. There are so many boats it is impossible to have our people in all of them, but I confess I think the Lower Nile boats are worthless for the work above, and they are certainly not worth the agony of hauling over the Second Cataract. So far the Wolseley boats have got on fairly well, but they are very much overladen, for they carry 100 days' provisions: and all those comforts one hears so much about in all the papers are not to be opened till Dongola is reached. I fear there will be a certain loss of life going in these boats, but as I stated before they have been very lucky so far, but that is not very far, not having reached Tanjür yet.

"I have just returned three days ago from a very pleasant trip with Com. Hammill to Tanjür and back. The first night, after dinner, with a glorious moon (full) I rode out to Semneh and joined Com. Hammill, slept, and after breakfast rode (on camels) by the desert route to Ambigol, had a look at the cataracts, and went to Tanjür, where we expected to find the shipwrecked crew of the 'Ghizeh.' After one hour's search we found them close to the wreck, which is now almost on her broadside close to the shore, and in a very fine house or shed built from the remains of the deck-house of the ship. The walls were of canvas, and adjoining were the officers' quarters, also roofed

in, and a floor made with the floats of the paddles. Outside with bars and bits of awning they had made a capital-looking tent. We got to the 'Ghizeh' camp about 8 p.m., having ridden for eleven hours, except half an hour to lunch, but we had capital camels, a good guide, and our interpreter, who proved an excellent cook, and our party was complete. The 'Ghizehs' had managed to save their machine-gun—which will eventually, I fancy, go to the front—all the ammunition and arms, two months' provisions, &c. The kits (clothes, &c.) of the lieutenant commanding (Reed) and Keppel were partly lost or destroyed by water, but none of them were in real want. Of course for the first day or two they were in want of proper shelter, but now their house is built they are quite comfortable and have their rations like any of us. They were rather dejected naturally, especially having the wreck in sight, and so close too. But it was the most providential thing how the vessel ever reached her present destination. Had she gone another 150 yards she must have sunk in a wide part of the river and in deep water with a rushing stream and no boat on board, and all would probably have been drowned. As it was the ship was hurried down the stream as she was filling with water. The engines stopped, for the blow knocked a hole through the engine-room, and in a minute the fires were out and the vessel was at the mercy of the

waters. She drifted down two miles and a-half nearly, whirled round rocks, sometimes going bow first, at other times stern first, clearing the rocks by the back wash off them, whirling into the eddies, nearly being driven into several small bays, but being whirled out just as they thought themselves getting into safety. At another time they were rushed along by the sides of precipitous rocks, which formed the bank for some 200 yards, almost touching the shore all the way, and lastly swept into the bay where the 'Ghizeh' now is, her rudder hooked up to a rock, and instantly her bow was swept in to the shore; a hawser was at once got out, and there she lay with the water level with her upper deck on one side. For some time it was hoped, as the Nile fell still lower, she might be repaired and floated again next Nile, if not this one, for she had only three plates off, under the engine-room. Now, however, she has turned over on her damaged side, and I fear there is little hope, or none, of getting her along again. We spent a pleasant evening with the shipwrecked mariners, and next morning walked out to the scene of the disaster, and then went down to Ambigol in Tyler's steam pinnace; picked up our camels and rode down by the banks of the Nile to a village half-way to Semneh, where we had an excellent dinner. Our camel man killed a lamb in our honour, and we had an excellent grill and native bread, waited till the moon rose at 8, and started off

again. By moonlight the river looked lovely; the lights and shades on the steep cliffs, the distant sand hills and ranges looking beautiful in their variety of neutral tints, with groups of date-palms close to the water's edge, and then the reflection on the water—a scene not to be forgotten. Our trip back was much shorter, but the road was so bad and steep in places that we had to lead our camels. We reached Semneh about midnight, slept in the tents belonging to a party of our men who are looking out for boats going over the Bab there, and after breakfast rode in here, where we found Pollen had gone down to Gemai with nearly all our men. Colonel Butler had telegraphed for me, but from my not being on the spot Pollen went, and then the steam-boats came along and so I remained to assist at this job, but I expect in a day or so I shall go down to relieve him. I was so very glad to hear G—— had been to Scotland, and though his journey had not proved very remunerative, still it is change of scene which always does one good. I always think it a mistake to stay too long in one place. I often think how much better it would have been if poor A—— had had a change. . . . I am glad to hear B—— is doing so well at Cambridge. I think he is a marvellous genius to pick up the violin as he has, but he is a musical genius. What pleasure to other people in society will he give later on! Such

does them, and may be some little profit, but little or no pleasure to other people except to a devoted parent like you, who always thinks her children are the most perfect in the world.<sup>1</sup> What a pity other people don't think so too! . . . I am becoming a regular rolling stone, and I doubt whether I should ever be able to settle down, for I am so devoted to travelling and seeing new scenes and places. And in the service there is no doubt in some ways it is a great advantage not to be married, especially if you have to be away for some three years at a time, for somehow in spite of all the prospect of no promotion and final retirement one lives on in the hope of pushing on. At any rate one cannot afford to let the grass grow under one's feet, and this I feel I inherit from you, for energy is a blessing one cannot be too thankful to possess."

"NAVAL CAMP, GEMAI,  
*November 20th, 1884.*

"So many thanks for your letter of the 30th October, which I received yesterday, but which I should have got two days sooner had I been at Sarras instead of at this place. I came down here a week ago to relieve Pollen, who, I am grieved to say, is down with a bad attack of fever and so ill that the

<sup>1</sup> Rudolph's humility and entire absence of self-consciousness always made him underrate his own powers. Both his drawing and singing were the means of affording great pleasure to many less partial critics than he supposed his mother to be.

doctors will not allow any one to see him. However, I am going down if possible to-morrow to see him. From what I hear I fear he will go no further with us, unless he recovers remarkably quickly, but any one is liable to it, if not here, higher up, and it is better for him to be laid up where he can get hospital treatment, instead of in a boat, where nothing could be done for any one.

"The 38th have lost another boat and the mess sergeant with her; the colonel lost all his gear (clothes, etc.). I am sorry to say one of our men died of fever yesterday at Halfa; he only went to hospital three days before, and it was supposed he would be all right in a few days, but, poor fellow, it was otherwise. He was at my quarters in the Alexandra, and a very smart nice fellow; one of our best men up here. Two other men were also buried yesterday. One company came up here 57 strong; when they left Cairo they were nearly 100, but were eliminated in various ways down to the above number—rather a bad beginning before getting to the point. We of course get all sorts of rumours, but your news is probably more authentic, so I won't say much on that score, beyond that the Mahdi is on the move and also Osman Digna, who fought us in the Soudan in the early part of the year. Now they have gathered their crops there is every reason, if so inclined, why they should move, and the Mahdi, if he is to keep up his reputation, will



have to do something. I hear from Captain Rawson from time to time, and he told me in his last letter, received yesterday, that the 'friendlies' at Suakim finding we were doing nothing have changed sides, and they have been armed by us. At the Cape too matters are looking very serious, and to think the whole of all these things might have been avoided if only the Government had shown a little firmness or even had they had a policy of some sort. . . . Lord Wolsley rode down from Dongola by camel a few days ago, had a conversation with the chief of his staff, and returned at once. He rode down in three and a-half days, about fifty-two miles a day, splendid going over this benighted country. I was dining that evening at the Canadian camp, and as soon as the train arrived bringing his lordship, they made up their minds to give him a reception, and in less time than it takes to write this they made a huge bonfire and closed round their fire and began singing part-songs wonderfully well, and as he passed they cheered him. He looked out of the window and waved to them and seemed much pleased; a very picturesque scene it made. I was much amused with what you said about the sketch of October 25th, but I must say I was disgusted with the sketches as reproduced of November 1st. In the first place blue-jackets do not wear waistcoats and look as the men represented in the *Illustrated* did. Coki, the sheik, was an



excellent reproduction, and exactly like him ; but not so Poore and the others of November 1st—very poor. I made what I thought a good group, and they made three separate sketches of it. . . I have been employed getting whalers repaired and refitted, but there is a man senior to me here, so I have only a secondary job. I am looking out especially to the fitting out of the Naval Brigade boats, and I trust we shall soon have a chance of moving on in them. The troops are passing through now pretty fast, taking boats from here. Where we had a day or two ago 246, now there are about 180. The only thing I fear is that when the Staff see the naval boats they will covet their neighbours' goods and appropriate them ; for this reason I have them nearly a mile and a-half from the upper end of the reach, to be out of sight as much as possible.

“The work here is continuous, but easy: turn out at 6, and work till 8 a.m. ; hour for breakfast, wash, etc. ; work till 12.30 ; dinner till 2 ; then work till dark, 5.40. The times are easy therefore, and the weather usually pleasant and quite cold at night, which is a blessing, but the last few days have been very hot again and very little wind.

“All the home news you gave me interested me very much ; in fact little bits of news of that sort interest me almost more than anything else. . . How I wish I had had more opportunities of cultivating

music so as to be able to play one's own accompaniments, but, do you remember, in '71 I had a chance of lessons and did not take them? We had a piano in the Alexandra and I was beginning to be able to play a few pieces, or rather, accompaniments, and then this business came on, and of course one is out of it again; still I hope, if only for one's own amusement, to have a chance of strumming away again. . . I was so glad to hear G—— had had a day's shooting at the outwoods. I wish he could get many days. I spoke about him to some of the Canadian officers, and they said, one and all, he was sure to succeed; but any way, if he is happy that is the great thing, and after all, this is first-rate experience for him. I hope indeed this has been a good year for him, for by the papers it has been an excellent year [for the harvest] taking it all round. Last Sunday I heard Mass at the Canadian camp, just like Brittany over again. They (the *voyageurs*) sang throughout, and very well indeed—in unison. The altar was in a tent open to the front, round which we were assembled. The men who attended were most devout in spite of a certain amount of noise outside."

"NAVAL CAMP, GEMAI,  
November 30th, 1884.

"So many thanks for your letters of the 6th and 13th inst., the latter just received. I was unable to write sooner, as we have been having a lot of finicking

work with the boats, getting the soldiers on. They are not getting on as fast as the authorities expected, and the sick list is very heavy ; at Halfa there are no less than 300 down, and as I think I told you in my last letter, Pollen has been seriously ill at Halfa, but I trust he is now going on as satisfactorily as possible. I went in to see him a couple of days ago, and found him very weak ; I fear there is no chance of his going on. But really the rumours one hears are nothing short of amusing, so preposterous they are at times. . . . I hear that Lord Charles Beresford told an officer to-day he should try and get me on. Without the Alexandra's and Monarch's—in other words the Cataract—party, there would have been no Naval Brigade at all. . . . Since coming here I have been fitting out the boats for the Naval Brigade, which are now increased to fourteen boats. We have ten ready, and the others within a few days, but the Naval Brigade will not move on till they have finished with us. Without the blue-jackets what they would have done fitting the boats out I can't think ; so we shall probably remain till all the boats and troops are gone on.

“The river is getting lower and lower, and now we can hardly recognise the water. The Naval Camp at Abkar looks another place altogether, and instead of swift streams it is a mass of mud and sluggish water, but not so higher up, where the water is getting bad

for boats on account of the rocks and bad places for 'tracking' the boats along, and the proof of it is, the slowness with which the troops get on. The 38th left here on the 6th of this month, and are only just past Dal, seventy-two miles from here.

"Since I last wrote another *voyageur* and one Krooman have been drowned, both of them near Ambigol, and a private who was in the boat when she swamped managed to get hold of a biscuit-box and floated down nearly three miles before he could reach the shore.

"I fear your fond hopes for my promotion are simply beside the question, and in a very short time the cataract work will all have been forgotten, and it will be hardly a claim, and once these senior men are put in, one's chance is a very small one indeed, if there is even that to look forward to; but one can only do one thing, that is one's duty whatever it is, and something might turn up some day.

"I hear the *Alexandra* has returned to Malta, where she will probably remain for the winter. I should certainly have been very much disgusted had I been there for the winter and no shooting again, but one generally manages to make the most of any place. When we first came up here we thought it quite a novelty sleeping in a tent; now it will be on the ground and no tent, but after tracking and pulling all day one will not be very particular; one gets

completely out of the way of pillows and sheets, etc., and sand makes a comfortable bed. One good thing about this country is that there is no rain, otherwise rheumatism would be rife as well as fever and dysentery. Several officers have already gone back on account of the latter. It is astonishing how it pulls people down.

“One piece of news in your last letter gave me some reassurance, viz., that Lord John Hay is good enough to have his eye on me. He is pretty sure to be at the Admiralty when his command in the Mediterranean is over. I trust he will remain the full three years and then one may have a chance of finishing the commission under him; he has always been very kind to me. Captain Rawson is the pleasantest captain I have ever served under—too good I sometimes think, for one will feel the difference with another later on.

“You will be glad to hear I had a chance of hearing Mass to-day and last Sunday at the Canadian camp. The Père Bouchard is a man who has seen the world, and profited by it, for he understands men. He was two years in Khartoum, and another at El-Obeid and beyond, and knows the Mahdi. The Canadians are a very hard-working lot of men. Curiously enough amongst them is an old friend of mine, John Windham, who at one time was a ‘mid’ with me. He has indeed had a chequered life, and is certainly one

of the best of the *voyageurs*. I had him to dinner before he went on, and he told me all last winter in Manitoba he had been working with his pick and shovel on the new Canadian railway. I hope he will have better days. I frequently yarn with the Canadians, and I get any amount of work out of them, and they insist occasionally upon my accepting some of their excellent tobacco, which is the most acceptable thing one can get. Some people don't get on with them; some of the *Club* soldiers don't understand their free and easy ways. I would give anything to have a trip to Manitoba and Three Rivers one of these days, but the same grim impediment always stands in one's way.

"You will be glad to hear I kept my birthday last Sunday as you would wish, for I went to Holy Communion, as did numbers of the Canadians.<sup>1</sup> The altar was in a tent amongst the palm-trees, and the men all stood round in a semicircle and sang, and very well too, different parts in unison; altogether a very picturesque sight. Outside were Arabs, who hovered round, and, as is their custom, jabbered away. I nearly ran at them, but after a while they moved off. The Canadians have already lost four men, three

<sup>1</sup> It appears from a statement of the Abbé Bouchard's, already quoted, that he again went to Confession and Holy Communion—his last Communion—on Sunday, December 7th, and heard Mass for the last time on Monday, December 8th, the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

by drowning and a fourth from a fall. At best so far this is rather a cold-blooded kind of game.

"We are astonished to hear by telegram that the Bechuanaland question is finished, and that the Boers have given in; but what about the brutal murder of Mr. Bethell, the Government Commissioner? I suppose they have forgotten all about him. . . . So many thanks for thinking of the wedding present for C. F. Please send her the cross and necklace with my best love and wishes for her happiness, but that is certain, for he is such a nice fellow. So glad Bernard enjoys his university career so much; it will do him no end of good; also that Freda [his sister, Lady Howard of Glossop] has such a nice house, where I trust she will have a chance of entertaining me some day. . . . Delighted to hear Gerard is not getting ruined over his farm. I wish I was in England to buy you a new pony, for 'Fairy' is played out."

"NAVAL CAMP, GEMAI,  
December 6th, 1884.

"This is probably the last letter *in ink* you will receive from me for some time, for the first half of the Naval Brigade go forward on Tuesday next, viz., the Cataract party, and I am sure we have to thank Lord John Hay for it. . . . In time one of our party found means of telegraphing to the ship and letting him know, and I feel convinced that it is owing to



the orders he sent to Captain Boardman that we are now going on. The life of our party, Pollen, I am grieved to say, has been very ill indeed—enteric, if not typhoid fever, and is now very weak, but I sincerely trust out of danger. Still I fear there is no chance of his eventually joining us, but I am glad to say he will get his promotion anyhow, whether he comes on or not. The difficulties of the river are, as Lord Wolseley says, *immense*, and his Address, which was publicly read in camp, is one to stimulate every one to do his utmost; but at the Cataract of Ambigol there are no less than 170 boats unable to get along, and further up the Cataract of Dal is reported to be closed. Everywhere nearly we have to carry overland all stores, etc., and it is said the boats also, in one or two of the worst places, but I fancy the 'Navy' will manage to find water in the rapids to float them—of one thing you may be sure, they will do their very utmost. Nearly one hundred boats have reached this place, and without sails, so we have been hard at it making new ones, as many as possible in the time; fortunately, I think there will be no necessity for sails at present, for the last fifty boats, as they have not men to man them. The 75th Highlanders and 18th R. Irish go on in the next few days, and then the 79th, one or two companies, and then the whole business may be termed 'in motion.' The second half of the Naval

Brigade follows a week or ten days later, I believe ; but I *am* thankful I am going on with our party, especially after having fitted out every boat for them (N. Brigade).

" *December 7th.*—To-day has been the busiest day we have had for some time, and Lord Charles Beresford started off with two boats to Dal, to see the cause of the block, and returns in about a week or eight days, I believe, and will come on with the second half ; some of the 75th left, and a number of natives for transport service. The latter are fairly good for the ordinary stream, but lose their heads at once in the rapids, which is absolutely fatal. Another soldier was picked up (his remains) at Semneh, eleven already ; there will be many more before it is finished. The *voyageurs* have lost four, not five, as I said in my last letter, but they are not at all pleased with the river. If only the Government had been able to make their minds up sooner, what a lot of lives would have been saved, and the expedition, instead of being just on the move, would have been well on for Khartoum by this time. We (Naval Brigade) are starting very late, but I am hoping we shall do the distance in the best time, and so we ought, if they had not thought fit to put in all kinds of stores with the usual remark—'the Navy always manage all right'—and so they have continued until the last straw is on the camel's back. I trust the

weight will not prove too much. We have to portage everything in several places, so all this extra weight will tell terribly against the time we take, for this item will not be taken into account when we arrive at Dongola. The authorities expect a brush at Merawi, so I trust we shall get up in time. If it is possible we certainly shall.

"The 42nd have worked night and day in one or two places to get by the block, determined to get on, and so far have done remarkably well. One or two regiments have done equally unsatisfactorily—as far as the boats are concerned; but I have no doubt should there be a brush on the river one of these regiments (38th) will do very well, for they are a fine set of men, and their fault seems to be their unacquaintance with a boat.

"I managed to get to Mass to-day (Sunday) in spite of all the boats going away, with the result I remained filthy all day, not having my usual swim in the Nile. I am very glad indeed having been able to get to Mass. Since being here, and in more ways than one, it has turned up trumps, for I have met several of the swells, and I am glad to say manage to hit it off capitally with the soldiers commanding. Nothing could have been nicer than Colonel Grove all the time we have been here, and the result is that we have been working our very utmost. To-day the soldiers 'stood off,' being Sunday, but not so the

tars, for I kept them making sails, etc., till sunset, and they grasped the idea and worked well, but then they expect to have to work, if possible, harder on Sundays than other days. We have Pollen and ten men in hospital, and one man moon blind, so we are a good deal reduced from what we ought to be. We were nearly 70 in the 'cataract party' when we left, and now all we can get together from various casualties is 42 (without officers).

"This expedition, owing chiefly I take it to the absence of vegetables—for we only get onions (very few) once in a way—and living upon preserved meat, will lose most men by sickness, and exposure through getting wet, etc., tracking the boats along; by drowning in the cataracts; and thirdly, I fancy, by the part they are sent up here to play. Of course if the boats return fairly empty instead of being crowded up, so many casualties will not occur. If the whole business lasts into April, I see every prospect of *very* short rations, and if beyond, which seems certain unless many more camels are bought . .

"NAVAL BRIGADE CAMP, AMBIGOL,  
*December 14th, 1884.*

"This may be the last time for a day or two I shall have a chance of writing, for here we are with the cataract party fighting our way up the Nile, and a fight it is. So far, thank God, we have had no

casualties, and we are through Sarras, Semneh, Wady-a-Teir, and the lower part of Ambigol; and to-morrow it is a hard piece of cataract to do—so much so that we have to take everything out and portage overland. The next two days will be eventful ones, and then D.V. we shall be on the way to Dal, where everything will have to be taken out again, and *boats* and everything carried overland two miles up a hill, but I have no doubt we shall find means of doing this also. Anyhow, yesterday we took the wrong passage, and it was impossible to go back, so we stood on, and fortunately had a good breeze, or we should have been in rather a 'quandary.' We set a regular cloud of canvas, and every one is delighted with the boats I selected and their fittings. I had all the sails enlarged, and fitted up the boats like men-of-war boats, and it is really a beautiful sight seeing the boats driving along. In innumerable places, where the water, owing to rocks and the rush of the stream, is irresistible, we track through and take every precaution—sometimes fifty men on a rope to haul each boat through in succession—and till last night we were all in one camp together. Every boat has its tent and cooking materials, &c., so when it is getting dark we stop, secure for the night, and pitch our tents, which are double bell tents and most comfortable. Last night, unfortunately, the two boats which had gone up the

right passage had our tea and coffee, so most had to go without, but I had a private stock of my own stowed away for the officers and my boat's crew, so they got rum instead. Even when the boats were very deep in the water we determined to take that on, but in a month that will be finished, and I take it it is not likely to be replenished. Our officers are Pigott, Lieut. R.N., in command; I am second in command; Munro, Sub-Lieut., and a capital man; and Mr. Webber, boatswain of the Monarch. We have 45 blue-jackets, 2 stokers, 2 engine-room artificers, 1 carpenter, 1 interpreter—an Egyptian who speaks excellent French, so he is in my boat; and he is a cook into the bargain, and works like a horse when we are tracking along. Besides the usual weights carried in the boats by troops, we have one Gardner Gun and 8,000 rounds of ammunition for it, and altogether about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  tons extra weight; and then we have no Canadians in our boats. So far 28 people have been drowned; the *voyageurs* have already lost six. To-day here they were shooting the rapid reach, and they struck a rock, boat smashed to pieces, and another poor fellow was drowned. A blue-jacket with a Canadian crew dropped down the stream, and made an attempt to get off a man who was pitched on to a rock, and failed, had to cut their rope, and were themselves shot down; the next attempt was successful, and the man's life was saved. The

Canadians were so pleased that they passed the hat round, and gave Stevens a very handsome present for his gallant rescue; he was steering, and I am glad to say it has been officially rewarded. Anybody who can see what the river now is would appreciate what the rescue was. We arrived here after the affair had occurred. The man is coxswain of a steam pinnace here plying on this reach, which is now too bad for her to move further up. Through all the rapids, etc., except when tracking, the officers of course steer, but it is amusing to hear the soldiers talk about how of course the sailors know all about rapids, etc., as if ships went over rocks, shooting rapids, etc., every day of their lives. I got a hole knocked in my boat the day before yesterday, and she leaked so badly that when we arrived at Semneh we had to haul her up and repair her, and your devoted son did the carpentering; and, in fact, now we have got quite into the way of doing several little odd jobs besides sailing. I am going to make shoes when we are through the worst parts. To me, I may say, it is wonderful how the soldiers got through at all, and it is marvellous there has been so little loss of life. I only wish we had had a chance of moving on three weeks ago, for the river gets lower and lower and rocks crop up everywhere; an instant's hesitation in a bad place would probably be fatal to every one in the boat, but the soldiers work splen-



didly and tremendously hard. They have 10 men in a boat, and we have 7 on an average, so of course it is harder work for the blue-jackets when tracking, and rowing too, for our boats are much heavier. But I am glad to say the 'Blues' are working splendidly, and D.V. I trust we shall get along all right. The return journey is another matter, speaking only of the river. In July when the Nile is high, and better still in August, it merely requires nerve to shoot the rapids, but if the expedition is over before, and the return journey is in boats, I fear the loss of life will be very much greater; but after all, that is one of the extra risks of this expedition over any other. Our orders are *not* to stop at Dongola, but go straight on as fast as possible to Ambucol, near Merawi, and from there something is to be undertaken. We are bringing all necessary paraphernalia with us, and so we are sure if we arrive safely to go straight on to the front. The 42nd Highlanders are glorious fellows; every one knows what they are when fighting, and now to see them on the river is a sight—full of go, and determination to overcome the dangers of the river. Their officers are splendid fellows, for at the best for them the work is not theirs, and I am glad to say they are beating every one except the Naval Brigade. Our experience with steamers and nuggars has proved simply invaluable; had they changed the officers who commanded the



men on the 2nd Cataract, the men would not have had the confidence they have now. We form the first half of the Naval Brigade ; the second comes on in a few days. I fancy, when they have collected the blue-jackets who are to form it, Lord C. Beresford will, when we meet, command the lot. Hammill hauled our boats over Semneh, where he now is, and he looked very much cut up when he saw us starting without him. He entertained us at Semneh *en route*. All those choice provisions the papers were so full of for the expedition are not to be touched before Dongola, and many boats *never* touch them, as their mangled remains on the rocks show. I wish you could see me scribbling this letter, my sketch-book on the table, which accounts for the ghastly writing, and now, 11 p.m., the only time to write ; but there is a post going out to-morrow, so I determined, having arrived at a post, to start in and write a disjointed letter to you, as you are about as fond of getting letters from me as I am from you. [Some sketches are introduced here.]

- “Some of the places were very narrow, and the water simply boiling, but we are through, I am thankful to say. I must thank you more than I can say for your great kindness in writing so often. I have received all your letters so far. Do take the greatest care of yourself for all our sakes, and give my love to all. I hope to write again higher up

shortly. If only we can get above Dal, I trust we shall rattle on in the smooth water we have for 80 miles."

"SARKAMATTO, ABOVE DAL,

"December 20<sup>th</sup>, 11 p.m.

"A short letter this time to tell you we have reached this place safely and without accident in 10 days; the most momentous I have ever spent in my life. And to-day has been a thrilling one, bringing our boats through Dal; the slightest mistake anywhere, and 'mafeesh,' as they say in this country. We brought our boats through with everything out, and ten men pulling, and were favoured with a fresh breeze; got through the first four, then walked back and brought through the remaining three. We steered the boats of course ourselves, and never were the crews nearer 'kingdom come.' I take it that to-day's was a place where, if a boat came to grief, there was little or no chance of approaching her to bring off the crew. Lord Charles Beresford did pilot, having been through with a crew of Canadians once before. We tried it yesterday, and nearly lost a boat; no wind, and for the first time the Navy were beaten; had to find our way back, and did so in safety, 490, I am glad to say, having the place of honour, to fish out the way back as leader. Anyhow we got back all right, and to-day with the breeze we got all our boats through; waded

up again, for everything was portaged about 3 miles, and off we started again and reached this spot, where we have taken in 14 days more provisions *en route* for Dongola. Personally I am rather a wreck, hands skinned all over and like raw beef, and arms nearly ditto, feet cut about over the rocks, and thorns in them; so I am lame also, in fact what poor A. C. would have called 'a poor creature.' But I am thankful to say I got knocked about by hanging on to a rope let go by 3 blue-jackets, and got dragged over rocks into the water; but the boat was saved, so it was all right. To give you an idea of the kind of work it is through Dal, not a soldier goes through without 6 *voyageurs*, and most boats are pulled and sailed through by them entirely. They are astonished how our deeply-laden boats get along, and have got here in 10 days. They are simply invaluable to the soldiers, and are surprised how we have got along without them, but the 'nuggar' experience has proved invaluable. Still there are innumerable 'breakers ahead,' and we are not out of this business yet; 10 or 12 miles from here there are 6 miles of treacherous bad water, and more boats have come to grief than people know of. One company between Ambigol and Amara (above here) lost 6 out of 8 boats; another company 4 out of 10, and all their arms and ammunition; and all along the way one sees

wreck after wreck. It is astonishing how few lives have been lost considering the magnitude of the work to be overcome ; and it is astounding to me how the soldiers get along at all. Without the *voyageurs* they would not, or very few of them would, succeed. But the pluck of the 42nd Highlanders and 75th—the former were so keen that they actually started without *voyageurs*—I think beyond praise. Unfortunately we led one company above Semneh wrong, for we took the wrong passage, could not get back, and only got through ourselves with very considerable ‘difficulty.’ How they have managed I can’t think, but I trust all right. The 75th have got on wonderfully well also, and will have the place of honour in the field. The other unfortunate regiments are to be left behind to garrison *en route* on account of having lost so many boats. But if we come back by water not many of us will return, unless it is a high Nile, for the water changes so much and the first mistake, getting caught by an eddy, must be fatal. Providence has certainly looked after us well, and backed up our utmost efforts together with taking every human precaution ; still we can’t say too much till above Amara. The scenery between Tanjore and Dal is really lovely, the first really beautiful scenery I have seen ; high hills—for they are hardly mountains—perhaps 2,000 feet high ; the blue and purple hills—for it is only when close to them that one sees how

ghastly and barren they are—the green banks with here and there a cluster of palm-trees and patches of vegetation close to the banks, make a picture which if I return, I hope to be able to give some idea of, if unable to give a just idea of the atmosphere. The climate now is very good, and I think better than lower down, but the nights are really very cold indeed; last night we were cut off from our bedding, etc., on account of having sent everything on by camels to the other end of the Cataract, 3 miles distant. The men we got under cover with a very fair house I built with boats, sails, and biscuit-boxes, but Pigott and I slept as we were (or tried to)\* in the open. I had a baddish cough from being continually in the water before, and the freezing has cured it, and glad I was when daylight arrived, and away we started. Some of the troops have taken 28 days getting here, but I fear several of our men are knocked up, and no wonder if you knew what they have been having to go through; but there it is, we must get along somehow!

\* “I wish indeed Pollen was with us, for he was always so bright and cheery till knocked down by that wretched fever, and poor fellow, had he come along, there is no telling what might not have been his fate. You must excuse the writing, as my hands are such that I can hardly hold the pen, but don’t go and alarm yourself, for one of these days, when I can give

them a little rest, they will get all right.<sup>1</sup> My feet are the most troublesome, but I am horribly egotistical in giving you all these details always of self. And to think I should have never wished you the usual Christmas greetings, but if I have not done so in writing, you know well how I have wished you and all every happiness and blessing. We *are* preparing for 'peace and goodwill'! But I trust most heartily, my dearest mother, you and all are very well, and [you are] taking the greatest care of yourself for all our sakes, and I wish you many, many happy returns of the new year. The same to all your party; I mean Alice, etc., and the Welds and Gwenny [his sister Gwendolen]. I have been intending to write to her, and tell her from me that her scapular the other day was my only article of clothing when I swam on shore through a bit of a rapid with a line to get our boats round an 'awkward corner!' I wasn't quite sure I should reach, but fortunately did, and we hauled the boats round. How is Margaret? I wish she would write, and in ink, for up here, as you may imagine, letters and papers are much appreciated when received, for we have no books or time to read them. The water was so bad near the scenery

<sup>1</sup> The apology was not needed. All his letters to the last are written in the same clear and beautiful hand, though the punctuation, and sometimes the construction, is apt to be a little casual, as was under the circumstances almost inevitable. The marvel is that there should be so very little of this kind to correct.

I before alluded to, that I was only able to make a few rough sketches, and my hands prevent my doing much, or writing more this time.

“ P.S.—Five large crocodiles seen two days ago—not by me, however.”

The next three letters were not received till after the telegram announcing the writer's death at Abu Klea had reached England.

“ NAVAL BRIGADE, 70 MILES ABOVE DONGOLA,  
“ *January 1st, 1885.*

“We are now progressing rapidly, passing boats right and left which left ages before we did, and we are now doing an average of 22 miles a day against the stream, which is strong in places; but there are no cataracts, and it is heavenly work sailing along under every stitch of canvas as we did to-day, and made good 32 miles; had the same breeze lasted all day, we should have probably made 45 miles, but unfortunately it fell light during the afternoon. We started by moonlight and finished an hour after sunset, so as you may imagine we are not letting the grass grow under our feet. We passed two of the soldiers' boats dismasted and in a helpless state; no idea of how to repair damages. It is astonishing the ignorance of some of these gallant troops when they



get into difficulties, but perhaps very much more astonishing how they got through the cataracts at all. It seems now like a dream, for now we have delightful times sailing along ; hard work too, for we have to pull and track when the wind falls light, for we cannot 'tarry by the way' ; but there are few or hardly any rocks and only sand-banks and shoals to look out for ; occasionally we touch, but soon get our boats off again. And the last three days on the river our boats must have been a picture, with all sail set and even waterproof sheets turned to account, and fortunately turned to better use. [Sketches of boats here.] We are all anxiously looking forward to receiving a pile of letters when we arrive at Debbah or Ambucol, and there seems little doubt we are going across the desert to Khartoum ;—a mere handful, so they say, for it seems to me the regiments are scattered all over the river ; but of course the camel corps will be on the spot and at least two regiments. I hope the 100 marines and ourselves will be together ; they are glorious fellows, and the backbone of the country. We heard to-day the advance would not take place till next full moon ; I trust it is not true. The weather now is splendid, cold at nights, and our men on the whole better than they have been ; but how we shall get on across a fiery desert on a pint of water



all the wells are defended, ought to take not more than 12 or 14 days. Camels will carry the water, and we shall have our arms and Gardner Gun to drag along. We ought to be at Debbeh on the 3rd with luck, and Ambucol is only 40 miles beyond, but the river takes an ugly turn making the prevailing wind foul, so we shall have to pull against a strong breeze and current for a few miles, but possibly the wind may follow the course of the stream. We met our old friend the Nassif Kheir a couple of days ago towing nuggars. She informed us she had orders to tow us up to Ambucol, but she had to put in to Dongola for wood, so I trust she will never catch us, as we are most anxious to do the whole journey unaided, and with all the helpless boats on the river it would be very hard lines on the soldiers. All our watches have run down, and we have the greatest difficulty in waking at the right time, but as I look out for waking up the camp, they sometimes find themselves up an hour or so too soon but never too late. We breakfast by starlight, but you have no idea what a wonderful boat equipment we have, tents, cooking gear, and everything which contributes to comfort, and all provided with most wonderful forethought on the part of Col. Butler and others who had to think the matter out. Our Nile stores, 90 days, are intact, and I believe we are the only party which can boast the same; in many cases they

have been broken into, and bacon, etc., and medical comforts used, viz., three bottles of brandy, etc.; they will get skinned, but we made a matter of honour that nothing should be touched, and had men at all the portages to look thoroughly well after the niggers who carried it, and only a few private articles were lost, which I call wonderful considering the amount of carrying at different points there was to be done. I want you kindly to get me two watches, *nickel*, from the Midland Watch-making Company; they cost 25s. each, and would be of infinite use perhaps later on, and if not they are not of any very great expense. I unfortunately lost all my gold out of one of my pockets, when stripping to carry a line ashore for our boats; it was all I had, £4, but after all one doesn't much want money, and I have managed to pick up a few eggs on the way with the remaining piastres ( $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ ) I had. But the provisions are more than enough, and naturally I eat hardly any meat here, but rice and preserved potato, soup made out of the tinned meat, and tea and coffee, and I am thankful to say I have been wonderfully well; thank God! No one knows what we went through getting up as far as Hannek, but here we are providentially all right, and without a casualty of any sort, and our boats in thorough good repair. I trust you will be able to read my shocking writing, but I am writing in the tent on my knees with a bit of

wood this time rigged up as a table.<sup>1</sup> From my heart, my dearest mother, I wish you and all many happy returns of the New Year. We drank all your healths heartily—and may *you* and all be spared for many years to come, and D.V. for me to meet you again later on. We shall know more shortly, but you must not be anxious if you do not hear from me.”

“KORTI,

“*January 6th, 1885.*

“So many thanks for your charming letter of December 10th received to-day, and also please thank Margaret very much for her addition to it, which was most entertaining. I was very glad the *Illustrated* people sent you one or two of the original sketches. I flatter myself they have not the stiffness of their reproductions, still I confess I am sordid enough to wish the editor would communicate with me to my advantage. I wrote rather a peremptory letter last time, asking that the sketches might be sent to you, whether used or not: for I know you would value them, knowing the difficulties under which they were done. The flies are, thank goodness, finished, but for an hour or two before sunset the sand-flies are most annoying, but nothing, I believe, to what they are later on—when the weather gets warmer; though the nights are cool and sometimes quite cold, the days are intensely hot, and to-day one of the hottest

days we have had. We had from Dongola light winds, foul usually, and calms, which meant dragging the boats along as best we could, and yesterday morning the wind was strong and ahead, so we got up at 2 a.m., and started by moonlight for this place which we reached at 7.30 p.m., pitch dark for there was no moon, and right glad we were to have arrived without assistance. We tracked over bad ground about 27 miles, very strong current against us into the bargain, and we were glad to get our hot tea and turn in: 16½ hours' work, only stopping for about 1¾ altogether from start to finish. Our old friend the Nassif Kheir came up with us 9 miles from here, having been sent down on purpose to tow us up. And we met her first at Dongola, where she was putting in for wood, and expected to pick us up next day, but in spite of head winds, we went as fast as she did, and we did our utmost to get in before her, and she arrived too late to tow us. Our boats looked in beautiful order as they rode past the 'only General,' who stood on the bank, and watched us go by to our (or the boat's) last resting-place, and was much pleased as we tossed our oars as a salute to him as we went by. He remarked how beautifully clean our boats looked, and in as good condition as when we started. To-day we returned all our stores into the Commissariat, and turned our boats

get our ships of the desert, and the morning after start off into the desert with the Guards for Gakdul, 100 miles across the desert, then 90 miles and odd across to Metammeh for Shendy, where we expect D.V. to find some of Gordon's steamers, get on board there, and then try and force our way through to Khartoum. For the Nile being so low there are, no doubt, no end of rapids, and the 6th Cataract stops the way, but we trust to be able to get them along somehow, if they have enough steaming power for the work. If successful, we shall return by steamer, and go right on to Berber, and thence, all well, go across the desert again to Suakim through Osman Digna's country, and back by the Red Sea ;—that I believe is supposed to be our programme, but who can tell what may happen before that time arrives?

“A party starts to-morrow up the river for Merawi, the scene of Stewart's murder, to punish the natives, and bad water they will have to go through. For there are no end of bad places 50 miles beyond this, which extend, so it is said, for 150 miles, and no niggers to drag the steamers over, for above they are no longer friendlies. The General seems sanguine about the result; but all are agreed it is the campaign with the greatest amount of hardship yet encountered by modern soldiers, and when the campaign is over, the dangers are not, for the river has to be encountered again, and for one life lost coming up, I take it 15 or

20 will be lost at least going down ; for at low Nile in the bad water, going a tremendous speed with the current, it is impossible to see a rock till almost on the top of it, and then the slightest error will prove fatal, probably to all in the boat. If he (Lord Wolseley) is wise, I think he will not endeavour to send the whole expedition down by water, but of course he may look upon the expected loss as one of the items of the campaign. There is now a very large camp indeed here, and one is smothered by the dust and heat, and thousands of camels (perhaps 2,000 or 3,000), baggage animals and running camels, but I fear our 'mounts' will be very poor, as most of the good animals have been appropriated, and the remainder have sore backs and generally weak, but I suppose we shall get them along somehow. Our boats we managed to repair when they required it, but I fear sheets of tin and white lead and tacks will hardly put our old camels to rights. My next letter will probably be from across the desert, that is if it ever reaches, for it is likely enough it may be cut off, so I shall write short letters probably, and send them whenever there is a chance. We are going to make a rush across the desert if the animals do not collapse on the way. There are some prisoners in the camp, taken at Gakdul ; laden they were, or their camels rather, with dates for the Mahdi, and one unfortunately

escaped, so the Mahdi will probably get a note of warning before our arrival, but they all seemed utterly surprised at the General taking this route, and fully expected us to have gone *via* Debbah instead, which is the main route, where we should have been opposed. Lord Wolseley keeps his plan to himself, and there perhaps he is wise.

“The second half of the Naval Brigade are close upon us, and from what we can hear they are beating our time coming up ; most creditable to them, but they got better winds, which means a great deal, and after leaving Hannek, we expected strong fair winds and proper picnic times, [but had] instead no winds, or foul ones, and hard work all the way—most disappointing, for I had intended working up a good many sketches, and of course never had a moment to spare. My hands, I am glad to say, are gradually getting all right again, but will be scarred for life all over ; but on these sort of trips if one gets back at all one is very lucky with a whole skin. There are a good many sick here, chiefly from dysentery and fever, but most of the more weakly men fell out and were left in hospitals on the way through the cataracts, and on the whole the state of health is good ; all our boats and men were perfectly sound when we arrived, which was a great blessing, but hands and feet a good deal knocked about, and a good many boots were stolen in portage out of the



men's bags,—about the worst loss they could sustain. And this camp has not yet received the stores which were at Dongola when the base was shifted up here, and the result is that many necessities of life will have to be gone without. By the time the second half of the Naval Brigade start they will probably have arrived ; for their sakes I hope so. Here we have fresh bread, a great boon, but above Hannek we were able to buy a little milk and eggs from time to time, and if one had had a gun no end of wild geese and pigeons might have been shot, but I sent mine back to Halfa. Had I brought it on, I should have had to leave it on the beach here, and it was too good a gun to bring on chance. A good cheap gun would not have mattered, and would have supplied plenty of food. . . . I have just received such a very nice letter from poor Mrs. Francis Kerr in answer to mine of condolence. She is, as I knew she would be, quite broken-hearted, but most brave in the way she is bearing up. I never saw a more devoted wife than she was, and a beautiful letter of resignation she wrote, enclosing a mortuary card. I deeply regret to say a great friend of mine, Colonel —, who was at our camp for a long time at Abkar, has committed suicide ; the last man I should have thought who would have done it, but he had a touch of sunstroke, and went to the hospital at Semneh to be treated, when probably in an insane mind he did the fatal

act. He was very much liked, and a more charming companion it has seldom been my lot to come across. . . . I am so glad to hear the Welds are gone to Ugbrooke ; what a charming place ! and a truly charming family the Cliffords are, and it is nice for them having C—F—— near them. It is nice for you having your old friend Lady Mostyn so near you : it adds so much to your neighbourhood ; but whatever you do, for all our sakes, take the greatest possible care of yourself. I wish you had a better pony to run you about the country, and if I was in England, I would soon present you with a new one.”

The next letter, the last he ever wrote, is dated just four days before the battle of Abu Klea, and was not received till three weeks after all was over. It is written in pencil, but quite legibly. It is given here—with the omission of a short passage of a private nature—just as it stands, without any attempt to correct the abrupt and somewhat elliptical style, which recalls all the more vividly the circumstances under which it was written. Still more noteworthy is the maintenance to the last of the same cheery and buoyant tone which characterizes his letters throughout—“it is best not to think about” the perils and hardships of that desperate expedition, and “one soon forgets them.” He still keeps his eye on the scenery,

that it will interest his mother to hear this ; but on the other hand, "few know what the future may bring." He perfectly understands that "the whole affair is critical," and—though in writing to his mother he takes care *not* to put that into words—that each successive day may prove to be his last. His brave bright spirit is unbroken, but not from any reckless or timid refusal to look facts in the face ; there is as little of foolhardiness as of craven shrinking or distrust.

"GAKDUL, DESERT OF BAYUDA,  
*January 13th.*

"My dearest Mother,—Just a short letter to let you know we have arrived here at the Wells and start to-morrow for Metammeh (Shendy) *en route* to Khartoum.

"We came across the desert in four days, and had a pretty hard time of it, about three pints of water a day, and some soldiers had even less. The nights cool, day burning hot, but not to be compared with what it will be later ; no time to sketch, all our time taken up looking after our camels and stores. Lost two camels on the way, one dropped down dead ; several men knocked down by the sun, but so far we are all well. First night had four hours' sleep, started off with moon, 1 a.m., and went on in column till 10 a.m., when we halted for four hours ; had no breakfast, and for three days ate only a little biscuit,

meat out of the question with so little water. Third day, got to some wells, water thick like liquid mud, and as some of the soldiers had had only one pint of water we forewent (is it English?) ours, so as not to block the way. The sight at Abu Halfa wells one not easily forgotten; men imploring to be allowed a mouthful, and sentries placed near to prevent the crush; but men, on the whole retained their discipline. In the desert the difference between before they have their pint of water and afterwards marvellous. If one had had it, one would have given any money for it; a certain number of camels kept on falling out all the way, and some were brought up by rear-guard. The soldiers wonderfully civil to us, and our men do as well on camels as a great many who expected to see us landed off their backs. Here men and animals had the most delicious water to drink, but to get water for over 1,000 men and 2,500 or perhaps more camels difficult. But now our real difficulties are about to begin, for we shall be cut off from our baggage animals for the whole day, as they are kept to the rear, as we go forward in fighting array, the 'Baggagers' in rear, and we expect a brush or two on the way down, the tribes between here and Metammeh having declared against us, but whether they will show fight remains to be seen. But it will be some time before you get further news from us, for telegraphs don't go across the desert, and

except when armed convoys go to the rear to Korti there will be no communication. We expect to find steamers at Shendy, and if they are—unless stranded over the cataract between that place and Khartoum, and we get through the narrow part of the river lined with the Mahdi's people—we ought to be at Khartoum, with luck, in about a fortnight or less from now. Thirty miles this side of Metammeh a fight is pretty sure to take place. We had 500 men on our flanks trying to get to the wells, but they offered no opposition; two prisoners were, however, taken, wearing the Mahdi's uniform, and some camels with dates, which we have since eaten. We have been here and shall have been two days, and a busy time we have had; got our Gardner Gun mounted, and this morning drilled all our men. The most serious thing is the want of corn for the camels, about eighteen pounds per camel for the whole way. If we meet with no opposition, Saturday next ought to see us across to the Nile and water again. But I fear the camels, great numbers of them, are in a bad way, but if we can only get them down to the Nile we can get lots of doora [maize] for them, but there is no doubt there will be a good deal of thirst on the way, but it is best not to think about it, and here one soon forgets what one felt on the way here. Some parts of the desert are very pretty, and I think I have in my mind's eye plenty of material for painting; my sketch

book has literally fallen to pieces, and I had a fire on my camel which warmed me up pretty well, set on fire by the sun, and several cases of the same occurred to other people, so one was not single even in this. My hands are still pretty bad, but I can hold my sword now if necessary. With the sun burning one's hands all day there is little or no chance of getting them right, and then one's blood must get out of order ; no vegetables, and the same corned beef, which on the desert one cannot eat. However, here we have had two good days' food ; I mean we were able to eat our rations owing to a good supply of water, but to-night, though in the land of plenty, the men on fatigue are working all night at the wells pumping, etc. Fortunately the Naval Brigade are excused this duty to-night, or this letter could not have been written, and I know what a pleasure it will give you, for we live in the open, and the light we have is a candle surrounded with tin to make a lantern, and one's knee for a table, with a piece of wood across. Had I had time, I would have made a sketch of our men on the march, but an excellent sketch is being sent to the *Graphic* by Villiers, he having, of course, nothing else to do. Melton Prior, *Illustrated* artist, is also with us, so my sketches would very likely not be in it. I had neither time nor opportunity of sending sketch of the Naval Brigade on the river, with their sails all set and making the best of the passage up. Lord

Wolseley remains at Korti, but he knows what he is about, but there is no use disguising the fact that the whole affair is critical, and it may be one of the greatest successes, or otherwise. If only the Government could have made up their minds six weeks or two months sooner, but no, so we shall have the hot weather to contend with, if the whole programme is carried out and all Gordon's people taken away, but the future only is before us, and few know what it may bring. In the meanwhile we are moving on. Little did I think this time last year I should be where I now am. Lord C. Beresford is with us, and he certainly managed with the General, Sir H. Stewart, that we should have our fair ration of water. . . . In this job everything finished is at once forgotten, and the *agony* we went through with those steamers out of mind by this time I expect.<sup>1</sup> My love to all

<sup>1</sup> It may be hoped that this is not so. In his official despatch to the Admiralty, dated Korti, March 16th, 1885, Lord Wolseley says that he "cannot speak too highly of the way in which they [the Naval Brigade] have all done their work, nor too strongly of the value of that work to the Expedition." And more recently, in proposing the toast of the "Navy, Army, and Reserve Forces," at the annual dinner of the North London Rifle Club, December 10, 1885, his Lordship is reported in the *Times* of December 11, to have said; "He had himself been brought frequently into contact with the Naval Service, and he could say, and say from his heart, that it had always been a pleasure, and a real pleasure, to do duty with the members of that profession shoulder to shoulder. . . . There had been recent experience of the admirable and glorious manner in which the Navy helped the



when you write, and tell Freda if she could see me now I should be sent flying out of the doors—four days without washing! and a little bit burnt and dried up generally. I have been wishing I could write to M., but we go on day and night, and have done so by the faintest light of the moon, which, unfortunately, is now finished. With most affectionate love to you, ever, my dearest Mother,

“Your very affectionate son,

“RUDOLPH DE LISLE.”

## CHAPTER XI.

### VICTORY AND DEATH.

“ And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill ;  
But, O for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still

“ Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !  
But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.”

*Tennyson.*

THE last letter Rudolph ever wrote is dated, as we have seen, on January 13, 1885, from Gakdul, which they had reached after a four days' march across the desert from Korti. It was not received till three weeks after the arrival of the telegram announcing his death at the battle of Abu Klea, on the morning of January 17. For the events of the four intervening days we are dependent on other sources of information, and I must content myself here with a

brief record of the principal circumstances of his last hours and his heroic end.<sup>1</sup>

At 2 p.m. on January 14, the day after his last letter was written, the little British force, comprising, according to Lieutenant Dawson, about 1,500 men in all, left Gakdul, with a supply of water designed to last three days and a small reserve. Sir Charles Wilson reckons the entire force at about 120 officers and 1,900 men; of whom 150 were left at Gakdul. They marched for three hours only the first day, but started again at daybreak on the 15th, and camped that night near Jebel Sergain. On the 16th they were off before daylight, and when they halted for breakfast between ten and eleven about six miles from the wells of Abu Klea, their scanty store was nearly exhausted, nor were they then aware that a rebel host of from 10,000 to 12,000 of the Mahdi's picked troops was interposed between them and the

<sup>1</sup> The ensuing narrative is compiled from the reports of newspaper correspondents on the spot—chiefly in the *Daily News* and *Daily Telegraph*—supplemented and corrected in some points of detail by information derived from private sources. The accounts of the battle in Sir C. Wilson's *From Korti to Khartoum*, and the papers by Lieut. Dawson and Col. Talbot in the *Nineteenth Century* of November 1885 and January 1886, have also been consulted, so far as they bear on the share taken by the Naval Brigade in the engagement. Sir C. Wilson, however, was in a different part of the field, and does not profess to throw any fresh light on the question "how the square was broken." Col. Talbot says: "The cause was that it was not closed up when the attack took place. It was not broken, because it was never properly formed."

water for which they were thirsting. The careful and intelligent scouting of the 19th Hussars had failed to detect any sign of an enemy till that afternoon, when—as they were painfully scaling the steep and rugged slopes, where hard black stones slipped from under their horses' hoofs at every step—they observed a body of cavalry concealed behind a ridge on their left front, while they were at the same moment confronted by a picket of Soudanese sharpshooters, holding a lofty peak on the right. It was impossible as yet to ascertain with any exactness the position or the strength of the enemy, but already the standards of at least twenty dervish sheiks were visible beyond the pass in a wady overgrown with long tufts of desert grass and belted by green mimosa-trees. General Stewart reconnoitred their position, and drew up his regiments with a broad front, as best suited to the nature of the ground, with a view to protecting non-combatants from any sudden flank attack, and in this form they advanced slowly, without molestation, to their halting-place for the night. There were lofty hills right and left, and low ridges on either side, from whence it could be swept by musketry fire; but they had not reckoned on the strength of the enemy in riflemen. A zareba<sup>1</sup> was hastily constructed from trees cut in the wady below, three

<sup>1</sup> An Arabic term for a fortified camp, variously spelt zareba, zereba, zeribah, &c.

flanking forts were thrown up, and a low rubble wall built, behind which the Guards lay down under cover ; and thus they provided against the risk of a night attack.

It was now the evening of January 16, 1885, the day before the battle : the hot sands of the Soudan were flushed with all the golden glory of an Eastern sunset—the last which Rudolph gazed upon—and the men were just preparing for a hurried meal, when suddenly from a peak some 1,200 yards in front the Arab fire opened upon them, which never ceased for five minutes together throughout the night. The order came at once to put out the fires, and so they had to content themselves with food half-cooked or cold. They had eaten nothing since the morning before, except a few hasty mouthfuls swallowed under heavy fire, and for twenty-four hours they had also been short of water, but they behaved as English soldiers do in such an emergency ; their discipline and their energy were alike admirable. There was yet another horror added to that night of agonized suspense. It is on record that among the most hideous devilries employed with deadly effect in the cruel dragonnades of Louis XIV., to reduce his Huguenot subjects to orthodox profession or—more often—to insanity, was the rendering sleep impossible by the unintermittent crash of military music from eve to morn ; the same refinement of torture had before

been applied by the Scottish Puritans to the Jesuits. To this torment also were our troops exposed, on what to so many of them was to be their last night on earth. "As the moonless hours wore on," writes one who was present, "the enemy increased their fire, and bands of them marched about from point to point banging their battle-drums and making a most execrable din." He adds that "this 'tom-tomming' is beyond all discordant noises successful in irritating and worrying a sensitive ear." They heard it even in their dreams. "The savage sounds rose and swelled all through the night, forming a fitting accompaniment to the wail of their bullets. . . . The officers"—Lieutenant de Lisle was one of them—"were enjoined to see that the men were at their posts with bayonets fixed, ready to spring to their feet on the first alarm." And thus, clad in their overcoats and with blankets wrapped round them—the night was bitterly cold—they lay down close behind the low wall and line of bushes, with their heads to the front. All lights were put out after dark, and talking and smoking even were forbidden, for when a light was struck, it became at once the mark for a bullet. "A stillness broken only by the whiz, ping, or thud of the enemy's lead hung over the square, even the tired camels grunting far less than usual." It was pitch dark, and between ten and eleven p.m. there was "a night-scare," and the officers

bade their men "stand to their arms," but it proved a false alarm, and this occurred thrice again before daybreak. Amid such sounds and surroundings Rudolph de Lisle's last night was spent; the night which for him was so soon to kindle into the dawning of the everlasting day.

Sir Herbert Stewart had ordered that, "when the planet Venus rose, the troops were all to get up, and stand to their arms till daylight." The air was at its sharpest before the sunrise as they left their chilly bivouack. There was an early breakfast of hot tea and coffee, beef and biscuit, but before it was over the Arabs had recommenced a well-aimed fire from about 1,100 yards distance; there were some 3,000 or 4,000 of them deployed in two lines of four or five men deep close to the wady on the left. At 7 a.m. the preparations for attack began, the object being to dislodge the enemy from the Wells of Abu Klea, four or five miles in front. At 7.35 precisely the troops, who had been formed into a "fighting square," marched forward, forty men of the Naval Brigade, under command of Lord Charles Beresford, being in charge of the Gardner Gun; the remainder were left in the zareba to guard the gear. The rough uneven ground was peculiarly trying for camels and for the convoy of the Gardner Gun, which, to quote Colonel Talbot's words, "was hauled by the blue-jackets with an energy



halted, the enemy—who outnumbered our men by eight or nine to one—“rose from the ravine in which they were hidden in the most perfect order. It was a beautiful and striking sight, such an one as Fitz-James must have seen when Roderick Dhu’s men rose out of the heather.”<sup>1</sup> They advanced rapidly—a sheik holding a banner at the head of each phalanx. The hilly ground was now left behind, and “with the exception of a low ridge or two a mile east of the wells, the sabas-covered land stretched forward unbroken by a single hillock, far to the east and south-east.” By ten o’clock the enemy were in full attack on the left face rear corner of the square, to which the Gardner Gun had been moved in order to bring it into action, the skirmishers running home at full speed before them, which prevented their comrades from using their rifles freely. The brunt of the battle in fact, as Colonel Talbot points out, fell on the Heavy Camel Regiment and the Naval Brigade; and at this moment, just as the fierce rush of the Mahdi’s Arab spearmen and swordsmen was pressing close upon them, the Gardner Gun “jammed,” after a few rounds had been fired, and was for the time rendered useless. The Captain of the Gun and the Armourer were killed in attempting to clear the barrel, and Colonel Burnaby, who rode impetuously forward, met the same fate. Then came the great onset of the

<sup>1</sup> *From Korti to Khartoum*, p. 27.

Arab horde, striking like a tempest upon the left face of the square, which staggered and fell backward under sheer weight of overwhelming numbers. The officers spared no effort to keep the men together, and Sir Herbert Stewart himself rode to the broken corner, where his horse was killed under him, and he was himself extricated with difficulty from the midst of hostile spears. Both Lord Airlie and Lord Charles Beresford received slight spear wounds; the latter was the only officer of the Naval Brigade who was not either killed or badly wounded.<sup>1</sup> And now the dark Arab wave swept clean over where the Gardner Gun had stood, and two officers and six men of the Brigade fell defending it, seven more of them being wounded. The officers were Lieutenant de Lisle and his intimate friend and comrade, Commander Alfred Pigott, who had together borne all the burden and heat of the day, and braved the worst perils of that desperate Nile ascent since shooting the Second Cataract four months before; "two of the most excellent officers in Her Majesty's service," as Lord Charles Beresford reports.<sup>2</sup> Fifty Arabs broke into the square, but not one went out alive. A quarter of an hour later not a single enemy was to be seen


<sup>1</sup> *From Korti to Khartoum*, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> See his official "Report of Proceedings of Naval Brigade" of March 12, 1885, submitted to the Lords of the Admiralty and published by authority in the *London Gazette* of April 28, 1885.

within a hundred yards. The battle, as Colonel Talbot expresses it, "was an Inkermann on a smaller scale—a soldier's battle: strength, determination, steadiness, and unflinching courage alone could have stemmed the onslaught." The last written order of Sir Herbert Stewart, dated from "Abu Klea, Jan. 18, 1885," sufficiently indicates his opinion of the conduct of his troops. Two sentences may be fitly quoted here; "The Brigadier expresses the most sincere thanks to the officers and men under his command for the exertions they made during the march from Korti; these were crowned yesterday by a triumphant victory which proved once again—so often proved before—that the courage of British soldiers when united with discipline is more than a match for any number of savages. . . . The Brigadier-General deplores deeply the loss of so many brave comrades, and laments they were not spared to share the high reputation for fearlessness and discipline which was earned by them equally with the living."

The body of Rudolph de Lisle was found, as Lieutenant Montgomerie states in a letter to his mother, "not alongside the Gun but about eight yards in front of it," whether from his having pressed forward, or from the Gun being forced back by the rush of the advancing foe. It was covered with more than fifty spear-wounds, and there was "one frightful sword-cut in the chest," but the face was not so much

disfigured except by blood. His sword was in the sheath : he had evidently been unable to draw it and had been using his pistols, but he had killed three of his assailants before he was himself surrounded and struck down, as Gordon was reported to have done a week later at Khartoum. Pigott lay close beside him ; both are said to have "fought like lions," and were recognisable only by their uniforms. Thus then he fell, fighting, like his Crusader ancestor of old, like his brother Everard in the Indian Mutiny—for he too was slain by the armed devotees of the false Prophet—against the enemies of England and of the Faith. True to the last to the grand motto inscribed on his sword—though on this occasion it was not unsheathed—he died, as he had lived, "for his God, for his country, for righteousness." And we may rest assured on His testimony who cannot lie, that the Saviour, whom from the first dawn of reason to the end he had steadfastly confessed before men, did not forsake His servant, "faithful unto death," in that supreme hour of trial, and will not disown him before the angels of God in the day when He maketh up His jewels. It was barely two months after his thirty-first birthday ; *consummatus in brevi explevit tempora multa*. We have seen how in his first letter from the Nile, dated "Off Alexandria, August 15," he observes, with characteristic regard for the religious side of the ordinary events of life,

"We are starting on a good day"—the feast of the Assumption—"so I trust everything may be successful." And it is a remarkable coincidence that his last opportunity of hearing Mass, just six weeks before his death, was on the ensuing festival of the Immaculate Conception; he had made his last Communion on the Eve. Not less remarkable certainly is it that at his Confirmation nearly twenty years before, when a boy at Oscott, he should have chosen St. Sebastian for his patron, as if by some prescient instinct, although he had already decided on a naval, not a military, career. And to many a loving heart, when the tale of bu Klea was told—of the triumph and the hero death—there must have recurred the memory of that youthful form, so exquisitely pictured by Tintoretto, of the soldier-saint pierced with countless arrows—as he was pierced with spears—once his intercessor, henceforth his companion, where the battle's din is hushed for ever, and the warrior's sword exchanged for the victor's palm. To human seeming his work was cut short prematurely in the fulness of his powers, and we grudge to the grave the glorious promise which lacks adequate opportunity of fulfilment. But perhaps we are too apt to forget that the longest and most diversified and active earthly life offers very insufficient scope for the latent capabilities of even an ordinary character. Their energies are not really wasted who, being

proved as gold in the furnace and found worthy, are speedily translated from among men ; in them "the promise of the morrow" shall be yet more abundantly verified ;

" In His vast world above,  
A world of broader love,  
God hath some grand employment for His son."

Early next morning, before the little army moved onward for Metammeh, a detachment was sent back from the Wells to bury the dead on the battlefield. A long trench was dug in the sand, and all the bodies of the slain, officers and men together, were hastily thrown into a common grave. Few and short, if any, were the prayers said over them, and no cross could be reared to mark out for profanation to the ruthless hate of Moslem fanatics the resting-place of our Christian dead.<sup>1</sup> There, amid the vast solitude of the desert of the Upper Nile, thousands of miles away from home, and from the kindly ministries of those so dear to him, all that was mortal of Rudolph de Lisle awaits the resurrection of the just. No knell was rung, no requiem chanted, no flowers were strewn by tender fingers—or ever will be—over that nameless and forsaken grave.

" He was the loved of all, yet none  
O'er his low bed may weep."

But the loss, thank God, is ours, not his. The faith in which Rudolph lived and died had taught him that no

chance which may befall our mortal bodies here, from the violence of the elements or the more cruel hand of man, can touch the virtue of the promise pledged on high to quicken this dull mouldering clay once more with an immortal energy, and bid the dry bones live. *Credo in resurrectionem carnis* is a verity of faith, indefectible and eternal, which shall be justified out of "the burning marle" of the Libyan desert, and the tangled maze of the Indian jungle, and the gleaming coral-beds hid fathoms deep beneath "the silence of the central sea," no less surely than out of the flowery sod of the quiet English churchyard, or the long dark labyrinth of Roman catacombs, where ten generations of Christian martyrs sleep their glorious sleep.

" In the silent sepulchres of death,  
Where Angels o'er the bodies keep  
Their cheerful watch, till the second breath  
Into the Christian dust shall creep—  
In heights and depths and darkest caves,  
In the unlit green of the ocean waves—  
In fields where battles have been fought,  
Dungeons where murders have been wrought—  
The shock and the thrill of life have run ;  
The reign of the Holy is begun !  
There is labour and unquietness  
In the very sands of the wilderness,  
In the place where rivers ran,  
Where the Simoom blast  
Hath fiercely past  
O'er the midnight caravan.  
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,  
Earth travails with her dead once more."

## CHAPTER XII.

### REQUIEM SEMPITERNAM.

“ What would we give to our beloved ?  
The hero's heart to be unmoved,  
The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,  
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,  
The crown to light the monarch's brows  
‘ He giveth His beloved sleep.’ ”

*E. B. Browning.*

PRAYER for the departed is a Catholic obligation which responds to one of the deepest and most irrepressible cravings of the heart of man. In the words of Holy Writ, “ it is a holy and salutary thought to pray for the dead,” and the pious tradition passed from the Jewish into the Christian Church, with the tacit approval of our Blessed Lord and the direct sanction of His Apostles. Its indelible record is rudely traced on the walls of the Catacombs, the earliest Christian cemetery, and finds expression in every single extant Liturgy, Eastern or Western, from the beginning. Even where the duty is not formally



recognised, the need is often felt. Thus, for instance, both Bishop Barrow and Thorndike wrote epitaphs for their own tombs expressly requesting the prayers of survivors, and in later days Dr. Johnson tells us that he used to pray daily for his mother's soul, while Coleridge again, in the epitaph he composed for himself, entreats all Christian readers to "lift one thought in prayer" for his own. Our Laureate, indeed, does but sum up the teaching alike of Divine Revelation and of human experience in the dying words of the great hero of his *Idylls* :

" Pray for my soul, more things are wrought by prayer  
Than the world wots of."

Nor does this charitable practice conflict in any way with the consoling persuasion that our dear ones passed "behind the veil" intercede for us also, or that we may, if so minded, seek their prayers, whether as yet they are fulfilling their appointed penance in the "golden prison" of suffering but expectant love, or whether—as in the beautiful legend of "the Faithful Soul," familiar to English readers in Adelaide Proctor's exquisite poem—a thousand years have been compressed into one supreme moment of earthly anguish, and they have entered already into the unclouded sunlight of the Beatific Vision and the sinless energies of their immortal home. So, indeed, we may well trust and believe that it is with him of whom we are thinking now, but it were no

true mark of piety or affection therefore to neglect to pray for him. No cup of cold water that is given in the Saviour's name for our loved and lost can miss either its end or its reward; our prayers avail for others, if they need them not.

It was then only natural and fitting, while it supplied fresh evidence of the warm regard so widely entertained for him, that no sooner had the sad tidings from Abu Klea reached England than some two hundred priests, unasked, proceeded to offer the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of Rudolph de Lisle's soul, while prayer was made for the same intention in several religious communities, and in many a lordly mansion and humble cottage to whose inmates he had endeared himself, as well as by the stricken mourners bound to him in a closer union of personal affection or of blood. It is, however, with the solemn Requiem Mass celebrated at the Cistercian Abbey of Mount St. Bernard, in Charnwood Forest, on Friday morning, January 30, that we are here more immediately concerned.

The abbey itself, as has been already mentioned, was founded just fifty years ago by Rudolph's father, Ambrose Philipps de Lisle, then of Gracedieu, at once in reparation for the sacrilege committed three centuries ago, when the lands now in possession of his family were plundered from the Church, and with the pious intent that the whiterobed brethren should

return once more to their ancient home, to till the ground, to exercise Christian hospitality, to intercede continually for quick and dead, as in days gone by,

“ And from Cistercian service-books to hymn  
The blissful Mother, as the nights grow dim.”

There, under the southern aisle of the nave, was laid the body of the founder in March 1875, amid the tears of hundreds, and there, seven years later, the survivors of his family were again assembled round his grave to render pious and reverent homage to the memory of the sailor son he had loved so well, struck down, like his elder brother Everard before him, by the hand of the Moslem infidel, in the hour of victory and in the opening prime of manhood.

There were present, of his own relations, his widowed mother, Mrs. de Lisle, and his two surviving brothers, Mr. Edwin and Mr. Gerard de Lisle, three of his sisters, Lady Weld, the Hon. Mrs. Strutt, and Miss de Lisle; his nephews, the present Mr. de Lisle of Garendon and Gracedieu, Mr. Bernard de Lisle, and young Mr. Edward Strutt, who served as acolyte at the Mass. The congregation included Lady Mostyn, Mr. and Miss Mostyn, the Rev. Hubert de Burgh, formerly chaplain at Gracedieu, the Rev. A. Martens, of Sheepshed, and many of the tenants on the Garendon and Gracedieu estates. The Requiem Mass was chanted by the Abbot, assisted by Father Dawson and Father Langley, as deacon and sub-deacon, the rest of the

monks forming the choir. The sermon was preached by Father Henry Collins, another member of the community and an old friend of the family, who was for a time chaplain at Gracedieu, before joining the Cistercian Order, and who had also preached at the funeral of Rudolph's father and of his eldest brother. It is full of characteristic touches and anecdotes, gathered partly from his own lips, and derives a special interest from the preacher's intimate knowledge of him who was, I will not say the subject of his panegyric—for he was careful, as beseemed the sacred place and occasion, to speak no word of mere empty praise—but of whose life and character he drew a picture so winning and impressive, because so strictly true. It is given here in full, in the corrected version he has himself kindly supplied for the purpose, as summing up, far better than any words of mine, the leading points of that "life of a beautiful soul," which it has been the purpose of this volume to delineate.

(SERMON.)

"How are the valiant fallen in battle! . . . I grieve for thee, my brother Jonathan, exceeding beautiful and amiable to me, above the love of women. As a mother loveth her only son, so did I love thee. How are the valiant fallen in battle, and the weapons of war perished!"  
—2 Kings [E.V. 2 Sam.] i. 25-27.

"These words form part of the Lamentation which David made over his friend Jonathan, fallen in battle

against the Philistines. The words of Scripture are always new. They have a freshness which never fades. They are the echo of the feelings of the human heart in every age and in every clime. They interpret those feelings in a way no other language can in all their wonderful variety. The Bible is a Book we can always turn to for support, consolation, and sympathy. It is the inspired Book of God. The words it contains are not human but divine. It is this that gives them their efficacy, for God alone knows the human heart; He alone can portray the feelings of the human soul. The Scripture is poetry above all other poetry, for it expresses our joy and our sorrows, our regrets and our lamentations, with a force and in a way that no other book can.

“In the passage that I have selected there are two things specially portrayed, the beauty of valour and the beauty of love:—‘How are the valiant fallen in battle,’ and ‘as a mother loveth her only son, so did I love thee.’

“Valour and love, as parts of the natural character only, are always beautiful. They are a something to which we cannot refuse our admiration. If a beautiful rosebud withers or sheds its petals on the earth, we mourn for the loss of its beauty; if a grand tree is cut down, and we behold it in its grandeur, prostrate on the ground, we mourn for the loss of its life. But man is not like a plant or a tree; he is created in the

image of God. How much more then must we mourn when men are cut down in the prime of their life—when a brave man's life is cut short, when those are taken away who possess grand characters and splendid qualities!

“We are told of Alexander the Great that one day, on the eve of a battle, he was making a review of his troops, and he was observed to be shedding tears. When asked why he wept, with that splendid display of men before him, he answered that he was thinking how in a few days so many of them would be no more.

“It is the natural sentiment to grieve over the brave falling in battle; but it is not merely natural, it is supernatural too. It is not for nothing that the Holy Ghost inspired the writers of the Old Testament to describe the valiant deeds of the brave, and their wonderful courage. God Himself admired them; He admired in men the gifts He Himself had given to them. And so in the Book of Judges we have narrated the various wonders which courage and bravery performed. In the Book of Kings the Holy Ghost gives us a detailed list of David's mighty men, and what they did to win our admiration. And in the Books of Maccabees and other Books of Holy Writ splendid examples of courage are given. God loves an undaunted spirit: He loves in man His

“And now we are celebrating the Requiem Mass of one of this noble character—a character very like that of Jonathan, ‘exceedingly beautiful,’ and the words of the text naturally recur to us as again found true, ‘How are the valiant fallen in battle! I grieve for thee, my brother Jonathan, exceedingly beautiful and amiable to me, above the love of women. As a mother loveth her only son, so did I love thee. How are the valiant fallen in battle, and the weapons of war perished.’

“Rudolph de Lisle chose the profession which he afterwards embraced at an early age. Yet before he finally decided, he had serious doubts if he ought to be a sailor or a priest. It was decided especially by the advice of Bishop Ullathorne that he should be a sailor, and that it would be no unfitting preparation for being a priest—later on, if such were God’s Will. Now, one might think that these two lives are of an utterly alien character, but they were not so in him. With all his fearlessness and courage Rudolph was thoroughly good to the core, and his life was indeed like the mixture of two lives, that of a sailor and that of a priest. He chose the naval profession, when a boy, because it seemed to offer him a life of daring and adventure, which were the prominent features of his own character. Sailors are generally venturesome and bold. This was his natural character, and these qualities were developed and brought out by the life

he had chosen. But he had the bold, frank, and fearless qualities of the sailor, without the coarseness and rudeness which sometimes disfigure the sailor. His whole life was full of brave deeds. This, however, is not the time or place to give a history of many of them, but I shall relate a few. On one occasion when quite young, at the siege of Lima, when the Chilians had nearly destroyed the town, he saw in an upper story a canary in a cage near the window. The house was all on fire, and the canary must necessarily have perished in the flames; Rudolph ventured himself into the burning house, reached the cage, opened it, and released the bird. It flew out and away, but almost immediately returned to its saviour and nestled on his breast for protection. He kept it with him all the day, and then took it to his ship and brought it home with him as a trophy. Even before the Nile Expedition his life was sometimes in imminent danger, whilst carrying out the duties entrusted to him. Once, on the coast of Chili, he was employed in a survey of the locality, whilst war was going on between Chili and Peru, and as he scoured the country on horseback, the bullets often whizzed by him, and it was almost a miracle that he escaped.

“On the Nile he was always in the front; his boat went first, and this was because his men loved him so, they would do anything for him. The Canadian



boatmen some could not manage, but they would do anything at his bidding. In every dangerous undertaking he led the way. Whilst he was on the Nile, one of the boats got loose through the carelessness of the men in charge, and was drifting away, but he at once threw himself into the Nile and went after the boat. He was much bruised and cut by the stones and rocks, but he secured the boat and brought it back, having ventured his life that the men might not be blamed for its loss. His whole life was full of brave deeds. Ever full of energy, he stopped for nothing. His life and character were such as to compel admiration. Strangers who were in his company only a few days or a few hours were struck with admiration. We may be sure, although particulars of how he fell have not yet reached us, we may be sure that it was in the front, that he fronted and led his men in battle with the same bravery that he had already evinced in the labours of the Expedition of the Nile.

“But in speaking of his character his valour must not put his lovingness and loveableness out of sight. These, as in Jonathan, were striking features of the beautifulness of his disposition. His sweet, gentle, loving temper, and his daring bravery added lustre to each other, setting each other off like two contrasting colours side by side. Father Lacordaire says: ‘You want to be loved—love then, and you will be loved’

in return.' This was Rudolph's secret of making himself so loveable—he loved. His love was shown most where love should be most shown—at home. He loved his mother more than all else. When he was at home it was her room that he chose to be in, and he made himself a sort of nest in one of its corners, with his drawing implements around him. Her private room was his home. But it was not his mother only whom he loved. He waited tenderly on his father during his last illness. He was the great favourite of his eldest brother, and he loved all his brothers and sisters, and was much loved by them; and he used to go great distances when able so as to give them and himself the pleasure of meeting together for a few days. Friends, too, he loved intensely, putting himself to great trouble and expense on their account. But his affection did not stop here. His heart was wide and large, and out of the plentifulness of his love he poured love around him everywhere without stint. He loved his ship companions, the tars and blue-jackets, and they were so fond of him in return that they would do anything for him; but he never took advantage or asked anything of them, which he himself was unwilling to do. On one occasion, when a midshipman only, he was on the watch during the night, in the height of a storm, and one of the masts laden with sail was carried away. Before the end of the watch

the captain came up and seeing what had happened was very angry, and asked the midshipman what he meant by having allowed such a thing to happen, and why he had not sent some one up to reef the sail. Rudolph replied; 'I would not have dared to do it myself, and what I would not dare myself I would never ask another to do. It would have been at the imminent risk of a man's life to attempt it, and a man's life is worth more than a mast.' The captain went away still fuming with anger, but in a short time returned and said to Rudolph; 'You were right and I was wrong; a man's life is of more value than a mast, and I wish every one did like you—it would be far better.' No wonder his men loved him, when he was so thoughtful for them. They knew he took his full share in anything arduous or dangerous. Plutarch in his *Lives of Celebrated Men* makes this remark: that, if a general wants his soldiers to serve under him with great fidelity and ardour, he must make them love him, and that the way to make them love him is not by handsome presents, by food or clothing, but he must put himself at the head of them in every perilous or laborious undertaking, and they will then vie with one another in doing all to serve him. This was the way Rudolph gained the love of those under him. It was his grand soul that was loveable, and his large far-reaching love spreading itself in plenty to all around, to every one.

“Father Faber says that God builds his graces upon the foundation of nature. He does not change the natural character or overturn it, but His supernatural graces have an analogy with the natural character. So it was with Rudolph. Sometimes he loved those much with whom one might have thought he would have had nothing in common. When at the Naval Academy at Gosport, being then only twelve years old, he used to spend his Sundays with an old Italian priest, Dr. Baldaconi, and they grew very fond of each other. He was early at the church and constituted himself the sacristan, serving the Mass, arranging the candles for Benediction, and during the day talking to the old priest, who called him the ‘little angel of his congregation.’ Later on when he was a young man at Greenwich, he made the acquaintance of some Sisters of Charity in the neighbourhood, and used to pass his Sundays a good deal with them, learning many a lesson of virtue from them. Such friendships seem to the worldly eye rather incongruous, but these Sisters of Charity knew what they were doing; St. Vincent of Paul their founder used to say of them that their veil was their cloister. Their veil marks them out in the camp or on the battlefield as consecrated to God. Thus living above the world in its very midst they could afford to let this young naval officer come to see them, encouraging in him that noble and pious

disposition which his frank simplicity made so very graceful in him. :

“When at Malta, later on, he interested himself in a Convent of the Little Sisters of the Poor, and when a bazaar was organized there to help them in their charities, not being able to give them money, he made some water-colour paintings for them, one of his own ship which fetched several pounds, and this was his contribution to their work. So it was that he mingled his love with the works of monks and nuns, sharing their desire for the things of God, and being drawn to them because of their pure, kind, and holy examples. He was as fond of being with those devoted to the service of God as with those of his own profession. He had a great hatred of sin, and when one of his friends had committed before the world a great public scandal, Rudolph said he would gladly have given his life to save him from this offence.

“His brave spirit often showed itself in the manner in which he stood up for his religion ; seeing on one occasion the men of his ship going on shore to attend the Protestant service, it struck him that some Catholics might be amongst them, who, for the pleasure of going ashore, were willing to go to the Protestant church. So he said aloud ; ‘ I expect, captain, that some of the men are Catholics, and by the regulations ought to be allowed to go to Mass.’

The captain was not pleased, but not being able to contradict the truth of the assertion, he called out that if any of the men were Catholics, they should stand out apart. Twelve men accordingly fell out, and were sent on shore to the Catholic church under the charge of Rudolph, who was then only a midshipman, just having entered the service. After this, when there was no Mass to go to, the Catholics came into the captain's cabin where he read the Mass prayers for them and a sermon too. If he had no sermon in a book, he made an exhortation himself, and he used to say laughing that he thought he could preach pretty well, and might still perhaps eventually become a priest. We know that in England the Catholic religion is in a minority, and it requires a great deal of courage at times to stand up faithfully for one's religion ; many would never dare to do so. Rudolph not only dared it, but thought nothing of it. He was so simple that it seemed never to occur to him that he had done anything wonderful. Yet the things that seemed nothing to him filled those who saw or heard them with stupefied amazement. On another occasion, later on, there was a French man-of-war stationed not far from his ship in one of the harbours of the Pacific Ocean, and as there was Mass on board this ship Rudolph thought it best to take the men to hear Mass there, rather than go on shore.

hour before the time he arrived with his men. He himself was invited by the officers at once into the cabin, where they showed him every politeness. But by and bye, the quarter of an hour being expired, Rudolph looking at his watch said ; ‘ Ah, I see it’s Mass time now.’ These French officers were Catholics, but lived as too many of the French do in total disregard of religion. They never expected the young English officer would himself go to Mass, but that he would only see that his men did. So when Rudolph said : ‘ It is Mass time,’ they replied ; ‘ Mass ! surely you are not going to Mass ? ’ ‘ Yes I am,’ said Rudolph, and at once taking leave he went off and entered the place where Mass was to be said. About the time of the Sanctus, one of the French officers slunk in. The next Sunday two or three came in ; the Sunday after the whole of the officers attended Mass from the very commencement, and they continued to do so for the six weeks longer that the two men-of-war were within easy reach of each other.

“ Rudolph thus rode over every obstacle that came in the way of his professing his religion. He did not mind whether he was despised or not for his faith. Now Jesus Christ has said ; ‘ He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before My Father and the holy angels.’ When a soldier dies in battle, he is not able, perhaps, to make his confession, or to have the help of a priest for the sacraments, and Rudolph



died as a soldier though in the naval service. But two months before he did go to Holy Communion. The Canadians on the Expedition had a priest with them, and on his birthday, November 23rd, an altar was made under a tree in the desert, and the Holy Mass was said, and Rudolph went to Communion.

“We all sin daily, and like the rest of men no doubt Rudolph committed some other sins before he died, but we may be sure Almighty God never let him die in mortal guilt. He had confessed Christ boldly and intrepidly before men; he had been bold for his Lord and Saviour, and God would never leave him unprotected in the hour of trial. But no doubt he was at times drawn away more or less into the vortex around him, and we ought to pray for him that he may soon pass through his Purgatory and be admitted into the presence of his Lord.

“But happy are they that confess their Lord so well in this life, and leave such fair and noble examples; and happy is the mother of such noble children. It is said of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, that when another Roman lady after showing off her trinkets said to her, ‘Where now are your jewels?’ her two boys came in from school at that moment, and Cornelia replied; ‘These are my jewels, educated in virtue for the good of their country.’ A mother that has good, noble children shall never be ashamed when she speaks with her enemies in the



gate. Let us pray, however, and offer Masses for the soul of young Rudolph, and gain indulgences, that every spot being clean burnished away, he may become a vessel meet for the Master's tablê."

And thus, with solemn rite and eloquent tribute of fitting recognition, were the last earthly honours paid to his blessed memory, who being dead yet speaketh to all who knew and loved him here. "Being perfected in a short time he fulfilled many times, for his soul was pleasing unto God, wherefore He hastened to deliver him from the midst of iniquities. . . In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure was taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction ; but they are in peace."

" Calm on the bosom of thy God,  
Fair spirit, rest thee now !  
E'en while with us thy footsteps trod,  
His seal was on thy brow."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE WITNESS OF A NOBLE LIFE.

“ Life is real ! Life is earnest !  
And the grave is not its goal ;  
‘ Dust thou art, to dust returnest,’  
Was not spoken of the soul.

“ In the world’s broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of Life,  
Be not like dumb driven cattle !  
Be a hero in the strife !

“ Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time ;

“ Footprints, that perhaps another,  
Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.”

*Longfellow.*

THERE are those who speak as though a military career was incompatible with the spirit if not with the letter of the Gospel, and who would hesitate or refuse, in spite of the splendid refutation of their narrow philosophy presented in the Calendar of the

Church, to admit that a soldier could be a saint. It might indeed suffice to remind such perverse theorists of his great example whose loss all England even now is deploring with tears of shame and remorse, General Gordon, "the most saintly of soldiers, the most soldier-like of saints"; but the chivalry of St. Louis has never lacked its representatives, who in every successive age have borne the Cross "on mailed breast," and like him, "through court and camp have held their heavenward course serene." And to every one of these applies in all its force what has been justly said of Gordon, that "his soldiership was an instrument of his Christianity"; it was part of their religion not to bear the sword in vain. There is nothing more inherently unchristian in military service than in commerce. In either case everything depends on the motive and the spirit; either pursuit may be used or abused, and will furnish, according to the use made of it, the raw material, so to say, for the crowns of the ransomed or the chains of the lost. There will be room for neither in the world beyond the grave. It will perhaps be objected that too often the army is no school of saints, especially in time of peace; but neither assuredly is the market or the stock-exchange or the law-court. Moreover, not only is a soldier's profession not in itself unchristian; it even affords facilities not so readily found elsewhere for the exercise of many high Christian virtues, such

as detachment, loyalty, generosity, and self-devotion, as might be inferred from the frequent warlike analogies and metaphors of the New Testament, and from St. Paul's pointed comparison between the duties of a soldier and a priest; not to add that David, the "man after God's own heart," and the chosen type of Christ, was "a mighty valiant man and man of war," from his youth. A great headmaster and preacher of our own day has observed—and his words are signally applicable to the subject of this memoir—that "for English *gentlemen* there is but one befitting post—and, if they strive to hold it, their country will never grudge them the possession—the first place in self-sacrifice; first," he goes on before adding any further illustrations, "in battle, in front of their regiments." No doubt war is horrible in some of its incidents; but, in spite of the plausible platitudes of the Peace Society and its admirers, there may be a peace more horrible still, from which we must be only too thankful, in the poet's words, to

. . . "wake to the *higher aims*

Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,  
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames,  
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told;  
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd!"

It is true of course that in a world dominated by Christian principle we should have no wars, as neither should we need any laws, for "the law is not for

the righteous but for sinners";—but, as long as "brother goes to law with brother," it is pretty certain that nations also will from time to time go to war with each other, and armies will continue to be as necessary as courts of law. And meanwhile it is a consolation to reflect that the soldier's profession offers to those who will so use it—and as some have used it—larger opportunities perhaps than any other, except the priesthood of the Church Militant, for the practice of heroic virtue.<sup>1</sup> When therefore we find it asserted as matter of common repute, that Rudolph de Lisle "in the midst of an army led the life of a saint," this was not altogether in spite of his official environment, but partly because of it. He was not indeed exactly a soldier by profession, but the military and naval services are closely allied in character and aim, and warfare is the common work of both alike, and it was moreover in the actual discharge of a soldier's duty that he fell at last. But he had already learnt in the noble profession, of which for nearly twenty years he was so bright an ornament, to cultivate the high qualities he exemplified in life and in death. In looking over more than two hundred letters of sympathy written to his family after the Battle of Abu Klea—many of them difficult to read with dry eyes

<sup>1</sup> "Surely the life of soldiers on service is a very school of generosity and self-neglect, if rightly understood, and is used as such by the noble and high-principled."—Newman's *Paroch. Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 146. It was so used by Rudolph de Lisle.

—it is impossible not to be struck, I do not say merely with the unbroken unanimity of commendation, but —which is much more remarkable—with the general agreement of testimony from every quarter as to the special characteristics selected for honourable mention. His kindness, “cheeriness,” loyalty in friendship, high sense of duty, unflagging energy, and unsparing self-devotion, are again and again dwelt upon by one correspondent after another. And this varied but conspiring testimony, be it remembered, comes from witnesses of all classes, ranks, and creeds; from relations, friends, and comrades; subordinates, or casual acquaintances; from rich and poor; Catholics and Protestants; ecclesiastics and laymen; generals, officers, sailors, soldiers, and civilians. Yet all unite in a common and harmonious tribute of admiration, affection, and regret. Some of these letters have been incidentally quoted or referred to in the course of the narrative; others will be noticed here. But it is impossible within the reasonable limits of such a volume as this to do more than present a few typical samples, which must be taken as illustrating the general tone of a mass of correspondence bearing every mark, not of mere courteous and formal condolence, but of genuine and sorrowful sincerity. And it will be well to begin with citing the testimony of members of his own profession.

We have seen already what Admiral Ryder and

Lord Charles Beresford, his commander in the Naval Brigade, thought of him. Still fuller and more emphatic is the generous testimony borne to his character by the latter in a letter not hitherto quoted, which may be fitly inserted here. Writing to Mrs. de Lisle, under date of "Korti, Soudan, March 9, 1885," he says ;

"Please allow me to assure you how heartily and sincerely I sympathize with you in the sad loss of your gallant son ; to know him was to love and respect him. He was one of the very best officers I have ever met with in the service—so smart, so cheery, so energetic, and so kind-hearted. He was the life and soul of our little Brigade ; no work was too much for him and no day too long for him, and he was always cheery at the end of it. Your loss is too sad to think of what mine is. I have lost a gallant, true, and noble friend. The service has lost one of the best and brightest officers. Your son must have been carried away in the first violent rush of the Arabs, in which all the men working the Gun were killed or wounded, excepting one man and myself, who were knocked down and so miraculously escaped. I found him after the battle about twenty yards to the left rear of the Gun, having evidently fought to the last.<sup>1</sup> A few paces from him was his

<sup>1</sup> It will be seen that there is a slight variation of detail between this account and Lieut. Montgomerie's quoted in ch. x.

friend and messmate, Commander Pigott. The officers and men of the Brigade were deeply grieved at the loss of your gallant son, as he was beloved by them all for his splendid character and kindly disposition."

Nor is this the language of mere compliment or kindly personal feeling. It will be seen from the following letter of Major Henry Dawson's to Mrs. de Lisle that Lord Charles Beresford spoke of her son to others quite as warmly as to herself. After mentioning that he has collected what could be found of Rudolph's things to send home, Major Dawson proceeds ;

"I always very much regretted that I had never met him, for I knew how much he was liked by every one with whom he came in contact. Since his death I have talked with several men in the navy who were his great friends, and I wish that you could have heard yourself the terms in which they spoke about him. . . . Lord Charles Beresford came purposely to see me when he heard that Rudolph was my cousin, and talked long and earnestly about him. He repeated again and again how highly he thought of him, and how much beloved he was by officers and men. He said ; 'Poor de Lisle was a very great loss from every point of view. I never met a man with a finer character ; his influence was always used for the best ; the men simply loved him, and would do anything for him ; it was wonderful how they went to him for



advice and assistance. Whenever any difficulties occurred it was always de Lisle who sprang forward and led the way in trying to overcome them. He was not one of those people who sit still and say to the men, "Do this," or "Do that," without first showing how it was to be done. He was always so cheerful and so very ready to make the best of things. I can't tell you the invaluable assistance he rendered to me, and what splendid service he gave to the expedition. I had thoroughly made up my mind to get him his promotion for it all. He was a good man in every sense of the word, a splendid officer, and a great loss to the service. I wish we had many more like him.' It was in this way that Lord Charles Beresford, a very shrewd observer of character, spoke of your son, and he only gave expression to the opinion which he shared with all others who knew him."

Not less emphatic is the testimony of Commander Hammill, under whom Rudolph served during the earlier part of the Nile expedition, till Lord Charles Beresford succeeded him in the command. Writing to Mrs. de Lisle from "Wady Halfa, Feb. 17, 1885," he observes ;

"Your son, as you are well aware, came up here with me in August last. He and my friend Pigott were my right-hand men, companions and advisers in all the hard work we had to go through, and I can

hardly yet realise the fact of their sad loss—nor do I like to mention our sorrow in the presence of your infinitely greater grief.

“Let me say however that I honoured and admired your son. He was a bright ornament to the profession and service he loved, and if there can be any consolation at such a time, surely it must be to know that he died nobly doing his duty, in a way which I think he would himself have chosen.”

In a subsequent letter Commander Hammill adds; “I can assure you that quite the pleasantest part of my work in Egypt, although by no means the easiest, was the early period when I was associated with your son at the Cataracts.”

Commander Holbeck, R.N., who had previously been associated with him, writes; “I know he has died the death he would have chosen. In my last letter to him I begged him not to foolishly throw away his life, as he was courageous, if possible, to a fault. This anyway he has not done, and I should say that he and others probably saved the whole square from destruction.”<sup>1</sup>

Captain Rawson, R.N., writes from “H.M.S. Alexandra [Rudolph’s last ship], Malta, Jan. 24, 1885,” to Mrs. de Lisle;

“The officers join me in regrets and sympathy

<sup>1</sup> This appears to be the opinion also of many who were on the spot.

with you all in the sad news that we have received by telegram of the death of your son in action. No particulars have yet been received, but we all know that, whatever may have happened, Lieutenant de Lisle has behaved gallantly and upheld the honour of the navy. We have lost a good messmate, and the service one of its most promising young officers, the ship a lieutenant that we can ill spare, and personally I have lost one whom I thoroughly respected."

Captain May, R.N., surgeon on the *Alexandra*, writing to Mrs. de Lisle from Dongola to inform her that he has sent home Rudolph's sword, adds ; "I need hardly tell you how all his messmates grieve at his loss. Personally I lose one of my best friends. Since our commission I have been his constant companion in all his shooting excursions, and have been with him all the time, until the last, that we have been up the Nile, and I can say with truth that I never had a better companion and truer friend. It is one consolation to think that he died as he would have chosen ; for his country, in the very front of the battle."

Lieutenant Munro, R.N., on whom devolved the melancholy duty of writing from Shendy on Jan. 22, to give Mrs. de Lisle the details of the battle of Abu Klea, after which he was himself shot through both legs, goes on to say ; "I need not tell you what

a loss he is to us. He was such a splendid officer, so cheery, and with such unfailing energy, we miss him dreadfully. Although we differed in our form of religion, we had many conversations on the subject, and I never met any one with more perfect faith."

One or two out of many testimonies of former messmates or companions of his in the service shall be added here. Lieutenant Darrell Davies of H.M.S. Heroine, on hearing of his death, writes from "the Coast of Chili and Peru" to Sir Frederick Weld; "As an old shipmate of Rudolph de Lisle's, and the recipient of much kindness from yourselves, I hope you will accept my honest feeling of regret for what has occurred. I watched him all through the campaign with interest, and have frequently said in our mess that, if any one would get the Victoria Cross, when the chance presented itself, it would be he. He very nearly joined the Heroine as second Lieutenant when we commissioned; I only wish he had, both for his own sake and mine. However, fate willed otherwise, and no doubt he was very satisfied with the position he was in. While posted by the Cataracts, promotion was much more easily attained in the land of the Pyramids than out in these monotonous waters, and there was good work to be done *en attendant*. Coming out again to this distant station, where Rudolph did two commissions,<sup>1</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> See chapters v. and vi.

frequently meet men who knew him, and many have been the expressions of regret I have heard delivered on the loss of a man so full of zeal and energy, and so pleasant a companion. I have some of his sketches at home still, now valuable mementos."

The following letter of Lieutenant Fehen, of H.M.S. Turquoise, Aden, has a further interest, as testifying not less to his religious fidelity than to his high character: "Although I have not the pleasure of being personally acquainted, I do not think you will mind my asking you to send me a photograph of your son Rudolph. He was one of my greatest friends in the service. Though we had been together at Oscott as boys, it was not until we were at Greenwich that we knew one another. As we were the only Catholics there, we were much thrown together, and I found in him one of the truest and kindest of friends. A good and thorough Catholic, he showed an example of the highest type of English gentleman. There are many in the service, both officers and men, who regret his loss."

"Both officers *and men*." We have seen already how beloved and respected he was, while still a young "middy," by the "blue-jackets" under him. And it will be worth while to put on record here a striking confirmation of this evidence, incidentally communicated to the Hon. Mrs. Scott Murray, who writes a fortnight after Rudolph's death; "I was at the

Infirmary, which I go to twice a week, and I found one of the nurses reading the news of the war and made some remarks, on which she said that her nephew in Ireland had sent her the paper which mentioned de Lisle's death ; he had been in his ship, and such a brave, noble fellow never breathed, and he and his mates would have gloried to serve and die under him. I thought I must tell you this ; it seemed so curious her telling me, and I then told her he was my cousin, and I was proud of him." Major Howell again, in a letter to Rudolph's aunt, Mrs. Phillipps, mentions having met at dinner Mr. Wagstaffe, midshipman on the *Alexandra*, who spoke of him with enthusiasm, and said that "the men worshipped him."

These illustrative testimonies to Rudolph de Lisle's repute in his own profession may be fitly closed with a brief extract from the Earl of Northbrook's speech on the Vote of Censure in the House of Lords, as reported in the *Times* of February 27, 1885, and the official notice of the Lords of the Admiralty. After referring to the high qualities of General Gordon, Sir H. Stewart, and General Earle, Lord Northbrook proceeds ; "I will not detain your lordships by any further observations of this kind, though I should not omit to mention, among other officers and commanders, Lieutenant de Lisle." In the notice of his death, communicated to his mother by command of the Lords of the Admiralty, they

“express their sense of the loss which Her Majesty’s service has sustained by the death of this gallant and promising young officer.”

When we pass from professional to general testimonies to his high character and worth, it seems natural to assign the first place among letters selected for citation here to those of high Catholic dignitaries and ecclesiastics who were more or less intimately acquainted with him. Cardinal Newman writes to Miss de Lisle; “I am shocked to hear of your mother’s and your new affliction. God alone can carry you and her through the trial. I can but give you my true sympathy; and I will say Mass for your dear brother.” Cardinal Manning writes much to the same effect to Mrs. de Lisle; “What consolation can I hope to give you, or what can I offer, that you have not already? I only know of two sources of solace for you, the one, the goodness of your son, the other that it is the will of God. Beyond which what can we have in this changeful life? You have had many sorrows which have followed in quick succession—but life is drawing on to a happy ending, and then, I hope, to an eternal home, where ‘none shall any more go out.’ I will not forget you and your good son in the Holy Mass.”

Bishop Ullathorne, as has been already noticed, is a very old friend of the de Lisle family, and Bishop Clifford is Mrs. de Lisle’s first cousin; both of them

knew Rudolph well, and were therefore the better able to appreciate her loss. The former writes from Oscott; "I am in full sympathy with you in your deep sorrow over the loss of your dear son Rudolph. It will be a great consolation to you to have known that he received the Sacraments before starting on the campaign. I offered the Holy Sacrifice for his dear soul on Saturday last [Jan. 24]. All the clergy of the College and those who had known him have been moved with sorrow, and sympathise with his mother and his relatives. He was a generous, heroic youth, devoted to his mother, devoted to his profession, full of the sense of duty, living in the grace of God. I can only say, 'He was taken away lest malice should obscure his understanding or fiction deceive his soul.' The ways of God are unsearchable; He calls them whom He loves." Bishop Clifford, after expressing his condolence with his cousin in "the sad news of dear Rudolph's death," adds, "I have said several Masses for him already. He has died nobly in the discharge of duty, like his brother Everard, and we must all feel proud of him; but it is a still greater comfort to think he was so good and true to his religion. For all that, it is a terrible blow for you, and the very fact of his having been so good and so brave and so universally beloved must make you feel his loss all the more. May God and our Blessed Lady help you to bear your



heavy cross. I pray for you and feel for you, my dear Laura, with all my heart. . . . I send my love and blessing to you and to her [Lady Weld] and pray for you and the dear departed ones." The Bishop of the Diocese (Nottingham) also wrote to express his sympathy with Mrs. de Lisle in her sorrow.

Dr. Virtue, now Bishop of Portsmouth, who for many years had been an army chaplain, and who knew Rudolph well—he had met him at Rome five years before, as we have seen—took occasion in his Lenten Pastoral, read in the churches of the diocese on Quinquagesima Sunday, February 15, 1885, thus to refer to the subject; "Very lately there fell in the Soudan one whom we well knew and loved. He was an officer who loved his profession, was distinguished for the practical and thorough fulfilment of his duties, and was esteemed and respected by all his comrades. He was at the same time a good and practical Catholic, *the very expression of whose face was an index to the spirit which reigned within.* To him death came swiftly and sharply, but we feel sure not unprovidedly, for he had taken care to approach the Sacraments not long before." I have ventured to italicize a few words, the force of which will come home to all who knew Rudolph personally. Never, surely, was servant of God more visibly "sealed on his forehead."

We have had good evidence before as to what Father Lockhart, who had known him from the

cradle, thought of him. On reading the fatal telegram at Rome—where he was engaged in the duties of his high office in the Order of Charity—he wrote at once to Mrs. de Lisle; “Is it possible, what I have just read? Is your darling Rudolph taken? I fear there can be no doubt that he is the ‘Lieut. de Lisle, Naval Brigade,’ who died bravely fighting the Soldan, the false Prophet, in Egypt. If so, he died as his father would have wished, if he was to die in battle, like your darling Everard, whom he so much resembled. R.I.P. . . . May our Lord comfort you; sorrow is no stranger to you now. Our Lord has been pleased to make you a ‘mother of sorrow,’ like His own Mother, and caused you to stand and see your dearest ones taken away by a violent death—but in the cause of God.”

The letters of another very old friend of the family, Father Collins, of the Cistercian Order, need not be quoted here, because his estimate of Rudolph's character is as freely and much more fully set forth in the funeral sermon given in the last chapter. Father Sisk, of the same Order, who had preached at the Requiem for his brother Everard nearly thirty years before, and had known Rudolph from childhood, wrote to convey to his mother “the universal feeling of sympathy that prevails, not only within the Abbey [of Mount St. Bernard], but throughout the neighbourhood, in which you are so much respected and

beloved. There has been," he continues, "quite a gloom in Shepshed, from which I returned yesterday [January 26], and where I offered the Holy Sacrifice for your dear son on Sunday. If anything can console you, my dear friend, after the aids of religion, by which we are admonished to be resigned to the Will of God, it must be the reflection that your dear Rudolph has given his life for the service of his Queen and country. After martyrdom for religion, what can be more noble and heroic than to sacrifice one's self for one's country? That God may in His goodness enable you to bear this sudden and sad bereavement, after other similar recent trials, is the sincere wish and prayer of all. The precious soul of your dear son has not been forgotten by us, more particularly at the altar. Please therefore accept the most heartfelt sympathy of Father Abbot and all our community." In a similar tone of deep sympathy, the Reverend Mother of the Convent of Sisters of Providence at Cardiff, where Bertha de Lisle is a nun, and where her brother used to visit her, observes in the course of a long letter: "I think I never saw a more handsome, winning, noble youth, and one could see that his worship for his mother was his supreme affection on earth. I did admire him."

The witness borne by friends and neighbours to the high religious standard exemplified in Rudolph's conduct during the time he spent at the Royal Naval

College at Greenwich, in 1875, and again during part of 1881 and 1882, is clenched and confirmed in 'an appreciative letter from Canon O'Halloran, of Croom Hill, Greenwich, who says ; " We saw a good deal of your son R  dolph when he was at the Naval College here a few years ago. The charm of his personal character soon won our admiration, not to say affection. His unmistakable piety edified everybody about the church. He was constantly at Holy Communion, and every morning in all weathers he attended Mass, though the discipline of the R.N. College made it very difficult to do so. I had myself a very high opinion of him in every respect, and—whether for religion or for war—was accustomed to regard him as a kind of revival in our own day of the ideal knight from the ages of chivalry and faith. When his death was known to the congregation, all were truly grieved, and not a few thought with compassion of the stricken mother, who lost so cruelly such a noble and dutiful son, a model alike of manly beauty and Christian piety."

Lord Emly had been a very old friend of Rudolph's fath  r, and had known all his family from their childhood. He naturally wrote to assure Mrs. de Lisle of his sympathy in her great sorrow ; " Only this morning Lady Emly was speaking of Rudolph, and recalling to mind his beautiful face and angelic countenance, as she recollected it when he was a child—and

then of course the memory of Everard's glorious death came back to me, and all the associations connected with Gracedieu and Garendon. Father Collins's most real sermon touched us much. What a son and what a Christian has been lost to you and to his country! Still the fruit was ripe, or it would not have been gathered, and we may trust he is one of that band which, if only we be found worthy, we must join soon." Miss Clifford was both a friend and a cousin of Rudolph's, one of the circle among whom he had always been a happy and welcome guest at Ugbrooke. It was a terrible shock to her to see the news of his death; she wrote to his sister, Mrs. Strutt; "He is one of the few in life whose worth showed more and more as he was well known. I cannot say how often I have been edified by him. I feel for him that this is the death he would have chosen; he was always ready, if any one is, to appear suddenly before God. Only those who knew him well can say how much he felt the trials of his life, and I feel so glad for him that he is out of reach of sorrow. . . . I feel too much to write more."

It is abundantly true, as Miss Clifford here says, that Rudolph felt keenly the trials of life, in spite of his bright and cheery temper, but it is also true that none but those who knew him intimately even suspected it. He was one of those who "the sharp-edged cross in jewels hide," and we have seen from

his own letters how under a smiling exterior he often carried a heavy heart ; while his outward life was a happy and successful one, he had learnt and intimately felt that "the trail of the serpent" is over all the flowers of the fairest earthly Paradise. Yet his sunny temper was no affectation. It was the outcome and genuine expression of a pure, brave nature, with nothing morose or little or selfish about it. And hence, wherever he went the wide world over, he always found or made friends, and he never lost them ; the impression once left was indelible. This has been shown clearly enough already, but two or three further illustrations, taken from letters of sympathy written after his death, may be quoted here.

It will be remembered that some of his letters, while he was cruising in the Mediterranean, are dated from Smyrna and several from Malta. In both places his memory is cherished with affection. From Smyrna Mr. Jackson wrote to Mrs. de Lisle, on receiving the news of Abu Klea ; "The years of sincere friendship that existed between your deeply deplored, gallant, and brave son, Rudolph de Lisle, and myself urge me to convey to you my heartfelt sympathy for the loss you have sustained in a son born to shine and to be an honour in all circumstances and in all places, and who would, had he been spared, have wrested the fairest and choicest laurels from fame. Words cannot convey what I feel, nor dare I approach

your deep grief, but the memory of my friend is so cherished and dear to me that I shall ever cling to the thought of your son's genial, irresistible, and sterling qualities, and the bravery of his gallant nature, with feelings of the most profound reverence, and look back upon the hours we spent together during our shooting excursions and elsewhere as amongst the most enjoyable of my life, which we had promised ourselves to renew this year in England ; but, alas, he has laid down his life in the defence and upholding of his country's honour. I heard indirectly from a friend (Mr. T. Rees), who left him at Gakdul two or three days before the fatal engagement, that upon drinking a farewell glass he sent me among others here his kind remembrances. Rudolph was also an esteemed friend of my father-in-law (M. de Herzfeld, Austrian Consul-General), in whose house some years ago he spent many of his evenings. They also feel deeply the cruel bereavement, as great friendship existed between all members of his family and your son."

In a second letter Mr. Jackson observes ; " His activity was something extraordinary ; he was never idle for a moment, and how richly endowed with those rare gifts that made him born to command ! The sweet remembrances of all that was noble, good, loving, gallant, and true must give a silver tinge to your great cloud of sorrow and grief for the loss of such a son."



Among the English families at Malta, where he had stayed often, and for considerable periods at a time, his death was felt almost as a domestic bereavement. Mr. Hunnyburn, an English resident there, writes to his sister, Lady Howard ; " Since your brother came to Malta, he has been one of our most valued friends and I can assure you we feel his loss most deeply. I have scarcely ever met a man at once so unselfish, brave, and sunny-tempered, and I do not think any man's loss could have caused more sorrow than your brother's in Malta—not only among his brother officers, but among his civilian and military friends. . . . I dined a few days before Christmas Day with one of his brother officers, and in talking of him he said ; ' *If* de Lisle ever comes back, it will be with the Victoria Cross ; he is so plucky and fearless that he *must* do some brave deed, if he gets the chance. And oddly enough only last Thursday, on board the Alexandra [Rudolph's last ship], another officer said almost the same words to my wife. He dined with us on Easter Sunday with Francis Kerr, and I think they both came to supper one Sunday after. In fact my children thought themselves quite defrauded of a *right*, if 'watch' or any other engagement prevented his coming to supper after Benediction on Sunday evenings, and all the winter the children have missed his fun and games with them, and longed for his return. Please don't think I am writing insincerely ;



I *am* enthusiastic where Rudolph de Lisle is concerned, and so are many more in Malta."

Among the "many more" must be reckoned Lady Dingli, wife of the Chief Justice of Malta, Sir Adrian Dingli, formerly Miss Charlton. She writes to Mrs. de Lisle; "It may be of comfort to a mother's heart to know how universally beloved and how deeply mourned your son has been and will long be by all who knew him in Malta, where the last years of his life were spent. I wish that I could convey to you in a letter anything like the feeling with which the fatal news was received here, a feeling of grief and regret as genuine as it was general. I can only compare it to the feeling at the convent when your Mary was taken away—it was remarked that every girl there seemed to have lost a relation. Both she and her brother seem to have had the same power of winning affection and admiration. If you could only hear how men talk of your son, and of the certainty of his having died in some exceptionally gallant way, and if you could also know how all (Protestants as well as Catholics) respected him for his sincere devotion to his religion, you would, I am sure, feel that this loss is one of those that brings some of its own comfort. . . . We saw a great deal of him last year, and his happy face and cheery voice will be missed as much in this house as in many other houses in Malta."

Miss Wilson, who had been residing with her family at Malta, and whose father spoke of Rudolph almost with his dying breath—he preceded him by some months to the grave—wrote to Mrs. de Lisle, on hearing the sad intelligence; “May I, though a perfect stranger to you, be allowed to express my heartfelt sympathy for you in the loss of your son? The reason I am writing to you is because I knew him so intimately during our stay in Malta, and we feel now that we have lost in Mr. de Lisle a friend who can never in this world be replaced. His great kindness of heart, together with his being one of the most accomplished of men, endeared him both to my mother and myself equally. Though of a different religion to the one I have been brought up in, yet I felt, whenever I saw Mr. de Lisle, there never could live a better or more earnest Christian. . . . He spoke so constantly of his family, and told me so much about his mother and his sister Margaret, that, though I am merely a stranger to you, I cannot refrain from asking you to accept my great sympathy in your heavy trial.” And in a second letter Miss Wilson quotes the testimony of another friend, who writes from Malta; “It has indeed been a terrible blow to all of us in Malta; he was so beloved by all; many and many here, who remember him lately so bright and happy among us, feel that a gleam of sunshine has gone for ever out of their sight.”

It will be observed that in all these letters—and they are but specimens of very many more—there is a certain monotony, so to say, of commendation and regret, which makes their concurrent witness the more impressive; so forcibly, and so winningly, had Rudolph's strong and gracious individuality left its mark on all with whom he was brought, whether for a longer or a shorter period, into personal contact. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum* is an acknowledged principle in Catholic theology; and the unanimous verdict of that little world—a very scattered and miscellaneous one, be it remembered—among whom Rudolph's lot was cast at various times during his sailor-life of constant change, can hardly be far from accurate in its main outlines. We have seldom either the opportunity or the patience "to see ourselves as others see us" in this life, but we can see him now as others saw him—not only relations or chosen intimates, whose judgment might be suspected of partiality—and their estimate of him is always immeasurably higher than his own.

Some idea of what was thought of him in the neighbourhood of his home, where he had been a familiar figure from childhood, may be gathered from the tone of the addresses sent to his mother, as soon as the tidings of his death reached England. On January 24, 1885, at a meeting of the Working Men's Conservative Club, Leicester, held for this special

purpose; "Resolved—That this meeting of Conservative Working Men record their feelings of regret and deep sympathy with the Family and Relations of the late Lieutenant Rudolph de Lisle, R.N., and direct that their condolences be forwarded to Mrs. de Lisle in this her sad bereavement, which has deprived her of a son, and the nation of a promising young officer, commending her sorrow to the care of a merciful Providence."

On the same day was held a meeting of the Co-operative Mutual Improvement Society of Hathern, when it was unanimously resolved to send a letter of condolence to Mrs. de Lisle in the following terms; "Dear Widow,—We beg to express the deep regret we feel at the intelligence of the death of your son, Lieutenant Rudolph de Lisle, at Abu Klea, and to assure you of our deep sympathy with you in your affliction. The keenness of your sorrow will however, we feel sure, be somewhat mitigated by the reflection that he died nobly in the discharge of his duty, and in his death obtained the reward of a deep devotion to the cause of liberty, justice, and patriotism."

On January 27, "at a Special Meeting of the Committee and Members of the Leicester and Leicestershire Conservative Club, Major Millican, J.P., in the Chair, the following Resolution in reference to the lamented death of Lieutenant Rudolph de Lisle,

of H.M.S. *Alexandra*, was unanimously passed," and forwarded by the direction to Mrs. de Lisle; "That this Meeting begs respectfully to tender to you its most sincere and heartfelt sympathy under your bereavement in the death of your brave son, while fighting for his Queen and Country at Abu Klea. The many excellent qualities possessed by him must render his death more painful to his family and large circle of friends, and, in expressing admiration of the courage and patriotism evinced by him, this Meeting trusts that a guiding and merciful Providence will sustain you in this hour of your sad affliction."

In her acknowledgments of these several addresses, Mrs. de Lisle expressed herself deeply touched by the kindly appreciation thus manifested among those who had known him through life of the high character of her son.

Thucydides tells us how two thousand years ago the great Athenian statesman declared, in his Funeral Oration, that "of famous men the whole earth is the sepulchre, and they need no external monument who have in every land an unwritten memorial graven on the hearts of all men." It may at least be said of our fallen heroes—men like Gordon, Stewart, Earle, Power, Pigott, de Lisle—whose very names ring music in the ear—that they have a living record wherever the English tongue is spoken, a

living home in every English heart. Their bodies indeed were *not* "buried in peace" but "their name liveth for evermore." The few testimonies cited here as a sample, out of very many more to the same effect, suffice to prove that during his brief career on earth, measuring not half the average span of human life allotted by the Psalmist, Rudolph de Lisle had not in vain witnessed a good confession before God and man, which will not readily be forgotten. I write these last words on what, were he still with us, would have been his thirty-second birthday, but we may not limit that ageless, deathless life by our poor human landmarks of temporal succession,

"For they reckon not by years and months where he is gone to dwell."

For him the time-stream is merged, henceforth and for ever, in the crystal sea of fire, whose waveless surface mirrors in pure unchanging brightness the glory of the Eternal Throne.

THE END.

